Having lost its humanist platform in the post-Romantic era, expression still stands on its own critical merit explaining the artwork in all its genres. An international team of eminent scholars explore the multidimensional perspectives of expression in the Occidental and Oriental traditions of aesthetics and philosophy of criticism. Under a single cover the editor, Ananta Charan Sukla, exhibits a plethora of ideas and insights expanding the horizon of our critical pursuit.

Ananta Charan Sukla (1942-2020) is an eminent literary critic, aesthetician, and philosopher of art, religion, and language. He retired as a Professor of English from Sambalpur University in 2002. He is a comparative literary scholar of global repute and founded Vishvanatha Kaviraja Institute and the *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics* in 1977 to promote studies and research in comparative philosophy and aesthetics. His works have been published by Praeger, Bloomsbury, Brill, Rubbettino, Rupa, and Sahitya Akademi.

ART AND EXPRESSION

Ananta Charan Sukla

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Contemporary Perspectives in the Occidental and Oriental Traditions

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In the Sacred Memory of my Late Teachers

Professor Sisir Chatterjee *(1922 – 1974)*

and

Professor Jagannath Chakravorty *(1923 – 1992)*

at the Department of English

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CONTENTS

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Ananta Ch. Sukla

Expression is an ambiguous and heterogeneous phenomenon that manifests the complexities of mental states in varieties of ways constituting meaningful signs in man's cultural behaviour both linguistic and non-linguistic. In its linguistic form expression is a highly codified system within a cultural context whereas in its non-linguistic form it evades the disciplines of a system involving an infinite range of behavioural signs, which, in their innumerable combinations and permutations, promise an immense source of creativity.

Notwithstanding the sophisticated efforts for its interiorization, the term, with its derivational strength, denotes an externalization of mental phenomena that can be experienced publicly in principle whether intended or unintended by the subject. Most appropriately, therefore, expression is a phenomenological phenomenon that crosses the boundaries of subject-object dichotomy that troubles both the idealist and the realist wings of philosophy.

Expression as manifestation of mental states might be spontaneous, involuntary, instinctual bodily changes, including facial gestures such as trembling, tremor, crying and sweating in case of expressing fear, or it might be voluntary actions such as running away or other efforts for escaping the object of fear. But these modes of expression are not so simplistic or clear-cut. Smile might be expression of appreciation, happiness, hope as also of satire, envy and revenge. Running away or getting back upon an object might also be expression of disgust and hatred. Signification of expression is therefore contextual.

Expression as voluntary performance of appropriate and proportionate action is still more complicated. Sometimes it is genuine being sincere or transparent, sometimes it is also pretensive or just formal without any sincerity. One offers a gift to a friend expressing sincere love, the other might do it just formally. As a public phenomenon, expression is, therefore, subject to explanation and interpretation. Sometimes, out of courtesy, one, desirous of taking more food, refuses to take any more on the host's dining table. A beloved, actually desiring to have a gift from her lover refuses to take any. A politician applauds the speech of his rival diplomatically. Expression of anger is performed by several actions such as throwing out the enemy's photograph, burning his effigy. But tearing away the letters of somebody might express either anger or sorrow

(due to the writer's betrayal or unbearably sad demise respectively). There are normally two ways of interpreting or explaining these expressions: by applying reason and appealing to belief. In interpreting the burning of letters one has to believe that the person concerned is shocked by either betrayal or death of the writer, and therefore he burns away the letters reasonably. Similarly, by applying his reason the host must interpret the guest's refusal to take more food as an expression of his shyness. Lingusitic expressions, on the other hand, are not as complicated as the non-linguistic ones because of the highly structural character of language. Linguistic competence needed for interpretation of linguistic expressions can be attained by educational training, although it cannot be said that the heuristic endeavour is sufficient for linguistic competence—one's presence of mind and inherent or cultivated flash of intuition are equally required. But in case of the non-linguistic expressions, because of their highly unpredictive modes and modulations, explanations and interpretations are highly risky.

Finally, expressions might be intended for communication to an audience for impressing him with a purpose where both the gestures and actions are voluntary, or they might be non-communicative, self-expressions in their spontaneous responses to the mental states. A child cries aloud and rolls on the ground for demanding an instant fulfillment of his desire by the parents. The father similarly chides the child while forbidding him from such expressions. Each one can understand and behave each other in dialogic expressions.

It is this communicative expression which concerns a philosopher of art who presupposes that the artist deliberately communicates an audience, present or absent, by linguistic or non-linguistic expressions, and obviously, also presupposes that the audience will interpret, explain, understand and enjoy his communication. The central issue that concerns this presupposition has built up a huge body of debate over two questions: whether this communication of the artist can be called an "expression" in the sense discussed above, and secondly, if so, then whether this expression is the manifestation of his mental states. The present volume enters into this debate by inviting a distinguished team of international scholars from various fields of knowledge who focus on this central point from multifarious perspectives, and instead of closing the debate finally, they rather open up new avenues that might encourage the scholars for reflecting on this extraordinarily vital issue exercising their own intellectual insight.

Among the scholars contributing to the Western wing, Ananta Sukla, in his prologue to the volume, surveys the critical concept of expression in its historical perspectives, since its emergence in the 19th century Romantic parlour to the contemporary postmodernist debate over the rejection of subjectivity through the highways and byways of several intellectual movements such as analytic phi-

losophy, linguistic structuralism and phenomenology. The first part contains nine chapters representing contemporary Western views on the role of expression in art, whereas the second part examines the notion of expression in the classical and contemporary theories of art in the Oriental traditions – Indian, Japanese and Chinese.

Rob Van Gerwen explores an avenue for shedding a fresh light on the relevance of the issue of expression in the contemporary society that emerges from the practice of aesthetic surgery. The issue that warrants our immediate attention is the legal, social, moral and even aesthetic validity of aesthetic surgery that recasts not only the physical injury as such, but also tends to recast the appearance of a person with a view to attributing it an expression that impresses the public aesthetically. The approach of Gerwen, therefore, covers the various intellectual issues concerning those of natural expression and artistic expression in their relationship with the phenomenology of representation. He examines the views of the critics such as Richard Wollheim and Gregory Currie who have contributed substantially to this debate, and concludes that the application of aesthetic expression in aesthetic surgery commits a major theoretical error that fails to appreciate the differences between natural expression and artistic exppression, to appreciate the basic theoretical position that it is a persona who bears aesthetic expression not a person. Aesthetic surgery is therefore a perversion in all its aspects—social, legal, moral and aesthetic—that spread narcissist virus in society.

Dale Jacquette outlines the fundamentals of a philosophy of expression that correlates language and various forms of art since the inception of human culture, taking account of the progress of this correlation by various schools and individuals of the Western critical tradition. Jacquette approaches the issue of expression from phenomenological perspectives highlighting the intentionality of cultural entities that include everything directed toward and imbued with human purpose.

Drawing upon John Searle's division between two kinds of intentionality—intrinsic and derivative, Jacquette defends expression and expressivism in considering a three-part philosophical ontology that includes physical (percepts), abstract (concepts) and the mind's qualia-bearing intentional entities. The intrinsic intentionality might be individual or collective referring to a single mind or many minds whereas the derivative inentionality refers to all the percepts and concepts derived from this intrinsic one by way of expression. Jacquette believes that this intentionalist ontology of culture, proposed by Heidegger and others, explains varieties of cultural products including language and the arts, and their reception by the audience or consumers for whom these productions are in-

tended, this process of reciprocation being an active (not passive) perceptual experience that constitutes the dynamics of artworks. This intentionalist ontology helps us overcome the puzzles of the subjective/objective dichotomy in such cultural phenomena as beauty, taste and etiquette.

Jack Bender is a pictorial artist as also a philosopher of art. He presents, with the illustrations from his own paintings, his critical experiences of the conceptual and logical correlations of several aesthetic notions that are apparently either antagonistic or unrelated such as expression, representation, reference, depiction, denotation and exemplification. Reference is the key-term in his thinking, which, he thinks, correlates both expression and representation in so far as both these functions are different modes of reference, and realistic representation, abstract formalism and abstract expressionism are correlated in the common ground of reference. Thus, for Bender, expression is not the metaphorical denotation of a painting by an expressive predicate. Although he believes in the semantic and semiotic functions of art broadly, he does not subscribe to the linguistic view of the pictorial reference as advocated by philosophers like Nelson Goodman.

David Goldblatt proposes a link between the Platonic theory of inspiration and the theory of expression that the modern philosopher of art advocates. He agrees with Arthur Danto that all gestural manifestations are not expressions unless they are meant for/ media of communication: "expression is actually the communication tokens." Expression may have a source or sources of inspiration either religious or secular, but the expressed is not exactly the inspired: "what is specifically expressed in art need not be caused by the same type of thing inspiring it." The efficacy of inspiration is resultant in an individual expression "in a mythical process of un-selving"—so that the expression ceases to be individual as it is "already delivered from individual will." Goldblatt correlates Plato with a number of modern thinkers such as Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Valéry, Collingwood, Wollheim, Derrida, Goodman and Danto.

Vinjamuri K. Chari stresses the etymological origin of the term "expression" in explaining its conceptual status constituted by the totality of five factors such as the act of expressing, the "inner" pressed out, the agent that presses out, the intention of the agent in pressing out and the medium distinct from and external to the thing to be pressed out. The "inner", according to him, is the emotive rather than the cognitive aspect of human mind. He further considers that any one sided approach to the concept is insufficient and argues for an integral approach consulting a number of philosophers who have contemplated on the issue during the last century. Taken in isolation, no causal connection between the "inner" and its gestural or verbal expression is ascertained because there is no

invariable concomitant between the two. The integral complex provides the necessary inferential linkage to the "inner" that is expressed. The anthropomorphic predicates called "expressiveness" would be correctly attributed to the represented content (characters or elements) in an expressive situation, whereas by extension this predicate may be attributed to the artwork as a whole.

In pinpointing the five-factor complex of expression, Chari concludes that the natural objects are not expressive in themselves unless the anthropomorphic expressive properties are ascribed to them as resemblance properties. "There should be no disjunction between the expressive act and the expressive quality, because an artwork... is an object of perception and comes to us as qualified in a certain way...that is possessed of certain qualities. The art-object and its qualities are grasped simultaneously..." Considering the literary art in particular, Chari holds that like the natural objects the purely formal or phonological features are not expressive, in themselves since they carry no meanings in themselves. The expressions symbolized in literature are "fundamentally causal in nature inasmuch as they are the effect of what they express and therefore are natural signs of feelings which they signify."

James Manns suggests "an adjustment to the age-old theory that the music makes feel what the composer intended to express ... music, when effective, does make us feel. Yet this feeling is invariably and essentially a response to the music itself." By intentionality he does not mean the "biographical data" as the anti-intenationalists like Wimsatt and Beardsley did. According to Manns, intentionality is a relevant factor in our responses to and evaluation of artworks.

Drawing upon Gestalt psychology, Manns demonstrates that perception is not a passive act, the mind being actively involved with the data of sensation. Thus aesthetic activity is basically a perceptual experience both on the parts of the artist and the audience. This active participation of the minds of both the artist and the audience rejects the emotionless accounts of emotion in music. All expressions (in the sense of mere externalization or publicisation) are not expressive that necessarily involve intentionality, and these expressive expressions called artworks, are necessarily meant for communication: "works of art," Manns quotes John Dewey, "are the only unhindered communication between man and man ... that occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience." The effectivity/affectivity of this musical expression/communication might arouse/evoke emotions/feelings in the audience, a truth, practically experienced by Manns in listening to Beethoven's Opus III Piano Sonata.

Julie Van Camp offers a precise history of dance theory and criticism from the classical times to the postmodern period through the modernism of the twentieth century. She observes serious disagreements on several aspects of ex-

pression in course of her historical survey: (i) is dance expression a subspecies of expression involved in all other art forms? (ii) should expression be confined to conveyance or metaphorical representation of emotions or should this be extended to expression of ideas and linguistic contents? (iii) what is a successful expression—authentic communication of inner feeling by the dancer/aesthetic communication actually understood by the observer/symbolic representations understood by the observer regardless of inner feelings of the performer?

In answer to such questions, Van Camp offers a pragmatic understanding of expression resisting any urge for an "essence" or singular explanation of expression for dance, which she thinks, suits all purposes and perspectives. Expression refers to a number of phenomena in our verbal and non-verbal activities depending on our context and purposes. An approach such as this tends to include varieties of dance expression instead of confining it to any specific theory-bound concept of expression. A dancer, for example, might say that she pursues the art for expressing herself. Others might say that their dance expresses their inner emotions for an effective communication to the audience. Some others, the sophisticates, might propose an expression of the symbolic form of emotions that have no referee to the actual emotions experienced either by the artist or by the audience. Postmodern dancers might understand expression as communication of intellectual ideas, but no emotions: "There is room for everyone on the dance floor". There is indeed, Van Camp observes, a complex structure of overlapping dance worlds depending on the role and context of the dancer, the choreographer, the audience, critic and the theoretician that enhances and enriches our understanding of expression.

The central issue in the theatrical performance is the relationship between the actor and the character of the dramatic text. Does the actor represent the character mimetically or re-present the character as interpreted / understood / experienced by him or by the director? If both the character and the performance of the actor are fictional, then what are the criteria of the Real that the early Russian realism of Stanislavsky wanted to present? The whole world of the theatre, as that of any other art form, is fictional where there is no representation, only re-presentation of reality, each presentation being independent of each other. The issue of realism in theatrical performance is, therefore, a relative one, and this relativism of presentation might, otherwise be called "expression" where the gaps between the actor and the character, and between the play and its on-stage performance are dissolved. Roderick Nicholls and Robert Scott Stewart examine this central issue with references to the dramatic theories and performances as adopted by a galaxy of artists during the twentieth century from Stanislavsky to Brecht and Beckett.

David Fenner correlates expression with representation and interpretation. In interpreting an artwork an audience correlates both its representational and expressive aspects with reference to the artwork as an object as well as to its relation with the artist. He chooses the film as an appropriate medium for illustrating his ideas. Instead of suggesting any specific definition of representation he gathers several of its meanings as offered by the theorists: resemblance, depiction, denotation, symbolization, understanding the world of representation as creation/fiction/make-believe that presents, in the Aristotelian sense, a probable world, not a possible one. On the other hand, Fenner

distinguishes between the two major traditional approaches to Tolstoy's communicative and Croce's cognitive theory of expression. Instead of taxonomizing the art theories as representational and expressive Fenner proposes an integrated approach to understanding and appreciating an artwork.

In the second part of the volume, in its Oriental wing, Ananta Sukla traces a theory of expression in the Indian (Sanskrit) intellectual history by studying the roles of the roots *kās* and *vyañj* as they are used in their derivatives *prakāśa* and *(abhi)vyakti* meaning shining, revealing and manifesting– for explaining the linguistic functions as dealt with in several branches of knowledge such as grammatology, linguistics and poetics. He further investigates how this linguistic model of manifestation is used for explaining the nature of theatrical performance in both its ontological and epistemological perspectives. Finally he concludes that "expression" can be redeemed of the charges of humanistic subjectivity if interpreted in the light of the Sanskrit concepts of *prakāśa* and *(abhi)vyakti*, in a sense, as "ambiguously self-expressive" as some Western critics would propose.

In dealing with the Japanese concept of expression, Jason Wirth strikes straight the very non-representationality of the reality apprehended neither by discursive language nor by determinate perceptual experience essentially a Buddhist view preached as early as Nāgārjuna (2nd c.) and Diṅnāga (5th c. AD) in India. According to the Buddhist epistemology Reality (*paramārtha*) is non-empirical and therefore non-apprehensible by linguistic cognition vitiated by name and form. Thus ontologically it is an evolution from pluralism (*dharmāh*) to the underlying essential unity (*dharmatā*) that is non-linguistic—a pure experience (*dharmatā/tathatā*) as Zenji holds. Brightness of a pearl has been the key image of the self-manifestation (revelation) of Reality in its cosmic (empirical) form, an idea preached as early as the 9th c. AD during the last Tang Dynasty of Japan.

Jason Wirth pursues this fundamentally non-linguistic (non-representational) character of expression (and therefore of communication) of Reality or *Dharma* that emerged in the 9th century and developed till the twentieth century

through the influential philosophers like Dogen Kigen and Nishida Kitarō comparing their ideas of Dotōku and Hyogen relevantly with their Western counterparts such as Spinoza, Schelling and Deleuze. Wirth interprets Nishida's concept of expression as *Hyō* (to rise to the surface)—*gen* (something like to arise or ontologically appear) that explains the very nature of art ("In art, expression itself is truth") as exemplified in two art forms—Zen Calligraphy and Rock Garden.

Mary Wiseman assumes a conceptual similarity of "expression" in both the Chinese and Western aesthetic cultures, considering expression as basically a relation between artwork and psychological state or quality, following Beardsley's observation that "an artwork expresses a psychological state or quality, and that of Arnheim that there is an intrinsic connection "between perceived appearance and the expression it conveyed." Wiseman then discusses the six principles of painting as advocated by Hsieh Ho (5th c.), the six canons of Chang Yen-Yuan (9th c.), the expressionist credo of Shih-t'ao (17th c.), and while proceeding on analyzing the various environmental, political and social situations in modern China since then, studies Chinese poetry and visual arts developed till date. Considering the sculpture of a current Chinese artist Zhang Huan, Wiseman reflects upon the revision of some of the ideas of both Arnheim and Ho that the art material is significantly expressive as are the dynamic properties of art objects. Thus the expressivity of artworks, as understood in both the cultures—Chinese and Western—is not inherent only in the manifestation of psychological states or qualities but also in the quality and kind of material that the artwork is made of, an idea that strikingly distinguishes the Eastern view of man-nature identical relationship from that of its Western (the Greeks and their followers) counterpart that endows only humans with reason, and ranks them higher than the non-human material world.

Finally, in the Epilogue, Ananta Sukla reviews the arguments presented in the volume so as to evaluate the concept of expression, in its traditional and contemporary perspectives with a view to judging its claim for explaining the nature of aesthetic creation in general by way of setting it against its rival concepts such as mimesis and representation.

PROLOGUE
Expression in Historical Perspectives

Ananta Ch. Sukla

".... What can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence."

Ludwig Wittgenstein

"The idea of *complete* expression makes no sense ... we express in a precise word the confused discourse of the world."

Maurice Merleau-Ponty

"Did he (author / subject) wish to *express himself,* he ought, at least, to know that the inner thing he thinks to translate is itself only a ready-formed dictionary, its words only explainable through other words and so on indefinitely ..."

Roland Barthes

"The writing of our-day has freed itself from the necessity of expression."

Michel Foucault

Expression as a critical concept originated in the Romantic tradition founded on liberal humanism that presupposed an epistemology of dualism—a binary relationship between the inner and the outer, the subject and the object, the human mind that knows and the phenomenal world that is known by the human mind—one term dominating the other in two different schools known as idealism and empiricism respectively. This critical concept continued as long as humanism continued to be a cultural ideology. The rival concept of expression had been representation, the former representing the idealist epistemology whereas the latter empiricist epistemology. Expression privileges the inner human subject

that externalizes its experiences by means of language and/or gestural behaviour, whereas representation privileges the phenomenal world presented to the human subject as reflections on a mirror or impressions on *tabula rasa*. Accordingly, language has been allotted two different roles in these two different epistemological streams: expressive in idealism and representational in empiricism. Thus Reality (Truth), knowledge and language occupy the central areas of intellectual activities where language in its literal form or metaphorical image serves as the means and mode of both understanding and communicating man's knowledge of R(r)eality. The word language is used either as a conventional system of spoken sounds or written scripts, or as a system of gesticulations, although the former has been considered the most precise and comprehensive one.

Expression has been an idealist concept in so far as it presupposes the predominance of human subject—the "inner" that exteriorises itself by means of a medium. Expression thus involves five factors: The "inner" (ex)pressed out, the act of pressing, the agency of pressing out, the medium of pressing out and the intention of the agent in pressing out. But this five-factor expression as a critical concept in itself and in its application to understand and appreciate the different forms of art confronts severe oppositions from major directions in contemporary criticism: the annihilation of the unitary and stable human subject in the poststructuralist linguistics, Marxism, psychoanalysis and culture theory on the one hand, and the subversion of the traditional subject-object relationship in the phenomenological meditations on the other. Therefore the art historical disposal of expression either as a conceptual synonym of representation or as a connotational mode of communication is not so easy.[1] It is therefore helpful to introduce the topic historically.

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[1] Carol Donnell-Kotrozo considers the antinomy between representation and expression as false. He understands representation as a correspondence to nature and expression as a deliberate reassembling of artistic elements and questions if there can be any logical dissimilarity between these two acts in the face of the existence of such a dissimilarity from art historical perspective. Expression is an anti-thesis of representation in so far as it indicates an intention to embody personal feelings in material form. Thus, expression as a modernist movement was also antithetical to impressionism a movement that viewed visual art as based purely on visual impressions. Representationalism and impressionism both adhere to the objectivity of reality, whereas expressionism considers the subjective dimensions of reality more real. (*JAAC*, 39, 22, 1980: 169)

An inherent circularity in considering expression as a deliberate reassembling of artistic elements apart, the greater confusion in Donnell-Kotrozo's reading is her association of the philosophical concept of expression with art historical phenomenon of expression. Nevertheless, the merit of her interpretation of expression lies in the very criticism

I

Meyer Abrams (1953) taxonomises the theories of art into four categories: mimetic, pragmatic, expressive and objective. The first type focuses, as also is based on, the relation of the works of art with the outside world, the second in terms of its relation with the audience, the third is grounded on the relation of art with the artist, and the fourth category of theory is based on the isolation of the artwork from all the three factors—the outside world, the audience, the relationship among the parts of an artwork, particularly literature. This fourth type of theory analyzes the themes or motifs of this art, as if it were a form of music or painting, striving for a quasi-scientific objectivity, judging it solely by criteria intrinsic to its own mode of being. Abrams' map covers the Western criticism that begins with the Greeks and ends with the Anglo-Americans of the 1940s.[2]

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of the concept that in tracing the innovative qualities in the features of the medium the philosopher locates anthropomorphism in the works of art, and anthropomorphic predicates are metaphorical. Paradoxically, in rejecting the antinomy between representation and expression Donnell-Kotrozo asserts this antinomy substantially by observing that representation is a denotational function whereas expression is a metaphorical one.

Similarly, Arthur Danto observes, "The philosophical point is that the concept of expression can be reduced to the concept of metaphor, when the way in which something is represented is taken in connection with the subject represented." (1981:197)

Richard Wollheim mentions two constituent notions of expression that are intersected in an artwork: natural expression and expression as correspondence. Natural expression is a secretion of an inner state—the gestures etc. that come out (or pressed out, *exprimere*) "so directly and immediately out of some particular emotional or mental state that it bears unmistakable marks of that state upon it," such as cry expressing sorrow. The second notion of expression, as Wollheim says, he constructs following a nineteenth-century usage, expression by "correspondence". This expression is an object that matches with or corresponds to what we experience inwardly in a particular condition. For an object to be expressive in this sense, it need not originate in the condition that it expresses. Wollheim argues that the artist's feeling reflects concern with the work of art as feeling a piece of natural expression whereas the spectator's feeling reflects a concern with the work of art as an example of correspondence. To put the argument simply: artwork is an object that corresponds to or represents a natural expression. Wollheim's view of expression in art (artistic expression/art as expression) thus turns out to be a representational theory of art where the 'naturality' of the so-called natural expression requires a serious logical test. (1980:30-32).

[2] This map has several limitations. Apart from its presupposition that there is a linear movement in the history of art theories without any overlapping among them, and that a critical age is defined in terms of its dominating theory, what is most vexing is his conclu

The third category of Professor Abrams, based on romantic humanism is summarized as follows:

> A work of art is essentially the internal made external, resulting from a creative process operating under the impulse of feeling, and embodying the combined product of the poet's perceptions, thoughts and feelings. The primary source and subject matter of a poem, therefore, are the attributes and actions of the poet's own mind; or if aspects of the external world, then these only as they are converted from fact to poetry by the feelings and operations of the poet's mind. (1953: 22)

Abrams quotes a number of Romantic critics, from August Schlegel to Samuel Coleridge through John Mill and John Keble:

> The word expression (*Ausdruck*) is very strikingly chosen for this: The inner is pressed out as though by a force alien to us ... The expression or uttering forth of feeling ... it is *essentially* the *expression of emotion* ... (all the fine arts) like poetry, are to express intellectual purposes, thoughts, conceptions, sentiments, that have their origin in the human mind. (1953: 22)

Abrams also quotes John Keble who directly contrasts expression with the Aristotelian imitation:

> Poetry is the indirect expression in words most appropriately in material words, of some overpowering emotion, or ruling taste, or feeling, the direct indulgence whereof is somehow repressed ...
> Aristotle, as is well known, considered the essence of poetry to be imitation ...
> *Expression* we say, rather than imitation; for the latter word clearly conveys a cold and inadequate notion, of the writer's meaning ... (*ibid.*)

Thomas Eliot, who opposed the personality of the author, his personal emotions and feelings expressed in poetry, believed yet in the communicative role of expression that transforms the 'personality' of the author in the poem by an aesthetic technique he called "objective correlative":

> The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an "objective correlative"; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the ex-

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sion of theory with the definition on the one hand, and understanding the concept of expression as a relational one on the other. A similar mistake has been committed by Allan Tormey (1971: 97) in considering a chronological succession of the critical concepts—mimesis being taken over by representation that being subsequently taken over by expression. No such conceptual supersession is available in the history of Western criticism or art history.

ternal facts, which must terminate in such experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked. (1920: 100)

Eliot is anti-romantic in so far as he rejects the personality of the author: "it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality ... But very few know when there is expression of significant emotion, emotion which has its life in the poem and not in the history of the poet", (1920: 58-59). But he is a humanist in believing in the autonomy of the poet devoid of his personal genesis.

The autonomy of the subjective status of the author's mind as the source or origin of the arts has been challenged. Not to speak of the emergence of the creative role of the reader or audience in constituting the work of art, the very concepts of the "inner", the act and medium of its publicization are so radically reformed that in the five-factor process of expression the "inner", the medium, the agent and the final "pressed out" all cry for their revival and restoration of identity. This major critical crisis is due to the rise and influence of anti-humanism in a number of correlated areas of knowledge, particularly concerning the nature and function of the human subject itself, its innocence and autonomy. Professor Abrams pursued his humanistic paradigm of writing and reading of literature, even in 1979, invoking Wordsworth's authority—"a man speaking to man". Literature, in other words, is a transaction between a human author and his human reader. But Abrams' call for a revival of humanism wanes away during the colorful days of post- structuralism and postmodernism.

II

The major question is: is there anything "inner", a stable, unchanged and continuous entity? Long ago the French Philosopher René Descartes believed so when he distinguished between the subject and the object, the mind and the body, the thinker and the thought:

> But we cannot for all that suppose that we, who are having such thoughts, are nothing. For it is a contradiction to suppose that what thinks does not, at the very time when it is thinking, exist. Accordingly, this piece of knowledge *I am thinking, therefore I exist*—is the first and certain of all to occur to anyone who philosophizes in an orderly way.
> In this way we discover the distinction between soul and body, or between a thinking thing and a corporeal thing.

This is the best way to discover the nature of the mind and the body ... By the term 'thought', I understand everything which we are aware of as happening within us, in so far as we have awareness of it. (*PWD*, I: 194-195)

Descartes also writes:

By the term conscious experience (*cogitation*) I understand everything that takes place within ourselves so that we are aware of it (*nobis consctis*) ... And so not only acts of understanding, will and imagination, but even sensations are here to be taken as experience (*cogitare*) (195).

Descartes' observations imply: (i) one might doubt about the existence of the external world, but what is absolutely certain, beyond all doubts, is the existence of the inner subject, the self, the mind, the thinker who experiences the external world; (ii) everything mental is conscious experience; and (iii) the "inner" world is independent of the external world—the subject and the object, mind and body are two separate entities that exist independently of each other where the existence of the "inner" subject/mind/self/consciousness is only ascertained.

The Cartesian dualism was subsequently converted into a subjective idealism in the Kantian and Hegelian traditions that believed in the reality of the subjective ideas only considering the external world of phenomena as the constructs of these ideas. The vast body of aesthetic ideas that followed this idealist tradition during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries used "expression" as the key term in explaining the nature and process of the artworks. Thus Benedetto Croce the neo-Hegelian identifies Expression with intuition, a mental activity that articulates our sensory impressions into knowledge. This articulation is purely internal, and the paradigm articulation of this sort is that of the artists of all categories: "We have openly equated intuitive or expressive knowledge with that which is aesthetic or artistic, by taking works of art as examples of intuition..." (Lyas 1990: 12). All art is intuition (expression); but all intuition (expression) is not art which is a particular species of intuition "something extra." Croce further rejects the empiricist view of representation as a "mental image" which is, according to him, nothing other than intuition. Epistemologically, intuition, expression and representation are synonymous: "Everything that is truly intuition a representation is also expression". (Lyas 1990: 8) Croce's cognitive view of art also asserts an idealist ontology of art, i.e., art is basically a mental entity, the externalization of which is only secondary or redundant. But Croce also uses the word "expression" in the sense of externalization. "One often hears", he writes, "people claim to have in their heads many important thoughts but not to be able to express them. But the truth is that if they truly had them, they would have coined them in so many ringing words, and thereby expressed them." (Lyas

1990: 9) Croce thus appears to propose a causal theory of verbal expression, i.e., mental expression necessarily causes verbal expression, and, therefore, it is the paradigm mode of external expression. Robin Collingwood, Croce's British compatriot, puts up substantially the Crocean view of expression substituting imagination for intuition. However, modern scholars reject Croce's identification of expression with representation that creates a critical confusion.

Susanne Langer, the American philosopher and disciple of Ernst Cassirer the German neo-Kantian, offers a theory of expression that avoids Croce's mentalistic interpretation. Cassirer speaks of expression as a function of language, which is, according to him, an expressive movement with four phases: sensuous, intuitive, conceptual and relational. Sensuous expression is again subdivided into three moments—mimetic, analogical and symbolical. Although language as expression is a movement from the inward to the outward, from the *context* to its sensuous form, the expression as signification is inherently a unification of both—"a fundamental synthesis from which language as a whole arises and by which all its parts, from the most elementary sensuous expression to the supreme spiritual expression, are held together." (*PSF* I.178) Language as an external articulation, is not merely for the purpose of conventional communication or dialogue with other—"This seeming externalization is an essential in its own formation". (*ibid.*) Cassirer further observes:

In linguistics as in epistemology it is not possible to divide the sensory and the intellectual into two distinct spheres, each with its own self-sufficient mode of 'reality' ... 'meaning' is not distinct from 'sensibility'; the two are closely interwoven. Thus the step from the world of sensation to that of 'pure intuition', which the critique of knowledge shows to be a necessary factor of the I and the pure concept of the object, has its exact counterpart in language. It is in the 'intuitive forms' that the type and direction of the spiritual synthesis effected in language are primarily revealed, and it is only through the medium of the forms, through the intuition of space, time and number that language can perform its essentially logical operation: the forming of impression into representation. (*PSF* I, 198)

Contra Croce, Cassirer acknowledges the essentiality of the externalization of expression in its linguistic form. Mimetic and the analogical phases of expression are referential in their correspondence to phenomenal world. But the ultimate phase of language, the purely symbolic one, transcends any reference to the world of immediate perception. It is in this phase that language attains its status of "full self-consciousness as an autonomous formation of the human spirit." (*PSF* III, 451). By implication, it is this symbolic phase, the autonomous, the

non referential language that constitutes or is elevated into verbal art as expression per se.

According to Langer, expression is the function of symbols: "A work of art is a single, indivisible symbol, although a highly articulated one, it is not like a discourse... language, spoken or written, is a *symbolism*, a system of symbolism; a work of art is always a prime symbol." (Langer 1953: 369) ... "Art is envisagement of feeling, which involves its formulation and expression in what I call a symbol", (Langer, 1953: 380). Langer distinguishes the linguistic symbols that are conventional and arbitrary from the art-symbol that embodies or articulates feeling. The structure of an art-symbol expresses/represents the structure of a feeling:

> A work of art is an expressive form created for our perception through sense or imagination, and what it expresses is human feeling. The word feeling must be taken here in its broadest sense, meaning *everything that can be felt*, from physical sensation, pain and comfort, excitement and repose, to the most complex emotions, intellectual tensions, or the steady, feeling-tones of a conscious human life. In stating what a work of art is, I have just used the words "form", "expressive" and "created"; these are key words... "form" in its most abstract sense means structure, articulation, a whole resulting from the relation of mutually dependent factors, or more precisely, the way that whole is put together... The absolute sense, which is sometimes called "logical form", is involved in the notion of expression, at least the kind of expression that characterizes art. (Langer 1957: 15-16)

Langer's view of expression has been, therefore, rightly assessed as a form of neo-mimesis. Her idea of expression as presentation of concepts is very close to the Aristotelian view of mimesis.

> Nevertheless, Langer distinguishes between expression and imitation: ... a technique of imitation is a means of recreating those aspects of the object in which the artist finds emotive meaning; it is therefore the normal practice of representative art, as direct denotation is the normal practice of speech. But when the significant aspect of the model, the crescendo of the nightingale's song, the warm colour of flesh itself indirectly rendered by device that abstracts only its significance without copying it directly, that is, when it is transformed into properties of words or of marble its artistic value shines forth like the intuitively perceived meaning of metaphor in language ... (*ibid.* 106)

Langer's observations imply the linguistic (metaphorical) paradigm of expression that anticipates Nelson Goodman's views: "What is expressed is metaphorically exemplified". According to Goodman, representation is purely a conventional phenomenon—anything can represent anything else (a literal denotation). Rep-

resentation is a literal exemplification whereas expression is a metaphorical exemplification. (Goodman 1976: 85, 89)

Leo Tolstoy offers an idealist notion of expression in the romantic vein. Influenced by both Rousseau and Hegel, Tolstoy views art as transmission of feelings and emotions that the artist experiences so that they infect the audience. Man uses language to communicate his thought to his fellow beings. But art is a language (medium) that transmits the artist's experience in terms of emotions and feelings to the audience:

> To evoke in oneself one has once experienced and having evoked it in oneself then by means of movements, lines, colours, sounds, or forms expressed in words, so to transmit that feeling that others experience the same feeling—that is the activity of art. Art is a human activity consisting in this that one man consciously by means of certain external signs hands on to others feelings he has lived through and that others are infected by these feelings and also experience them. (Hospers 1982: 205)

Tolstoy's view of art as transmission (or expression) connotes a theory of expression that is intended for communication that stimulates the same feeling in the audience as they were experienced by the artist. This idea of expression anticipates Eliot's notion of "objective correlative" devoid of the romantic involvement of the artist's personal accounts. Langer's "symbol", Tolstoy's "external signs" and Eliot's "objective correlative" are reflected in some of the contemporary philosophers such as Peter Kivy and Stephen Davies, who hold a resemblance theory of the expressiveness in artistic expression: natural expressions (including the whole range of behavioural signs) serve as iconic signs in the expressiveness of the artistic expression. But their understanding expression in terms of expressiveness overlooks the analysis of the nature of expression itself: what kind of act is this? Is art an act of expression at all? And how far art can be understood univocally as an act of expression, and in what way expression differs from or is similar to representation conceptually? Understanding art as expression in terms of the iconic signs of expressiveness is theoretically inadequate.

John Dewey distinguishes between outward discharge of passion and expression of emotion: "Not all outgoing activity is of the nature of expression." An observer might consider the raging man as an expression of rage, or a baby's cry might be expressive of its hunger or pain to the mother or the nurse, but the raging man is only giving way to a fit of passion, and the crying child "is only engaged in doing something directly, no more expressive from his stand point than is breathing or sneezing—activities that are also expressive to the observer

of the infant's condition ... As far as the act itself is concerned, it is, if purely impulsive, just a boiling over." (Hospers 1982:193)

This "boiling over" is distinguished from the expression proper. "Emotional discharge is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of expression. To discharge is to get rid of, to dismiss; to express is to stay by, to carry forward in development, to work out to completion". According to Dewey, expression is an embodiment of passion (or emotion/an inner excitement) through administration of objective conditions or shaping materials. The "boiling over" commonly called "self-expression" should be called "self-exposure". The child's crying is only an exposure of an inner urge. There is nothing to express. Dewey writes:

> As the infant matures, he learns that particular acts affect different consequences—that, for example, he gets attention if he cries, and that smiling induces another definite response from those about him. As he grasps the meaning of an act at first performed from sheer internal pressure, he becomes capable of acts of true expression. The transformation of sounds, babbling, lulling, and so forth, into language is a perfect illustration of the way in which acts of expression are brought into existence and also the difference between them and mere acts of discharge... An activity that was "natural"—spontaneous and unintended—is transformed because it is undertaken *as a means to a consciously entertained consequence*. Such transformation marks every deed of art. (Hospers 1982: 193)

Dewey thus holds an expression theory of art. But he distinguishes between instinctual or natural/spontaneous acts or gestures of self-exposure and transformation of these natural acts with conscious and intentional efforts by means of a language that is called "expression", the distinguished character of an artwork. It seems Dewey uses the word expression only in an aesthetic context, not referring to the gestural acts in general that he calls self-exposure. He also seems to agree with the Crocean understanding of expression as a paradigm concept of aesthetic epistemology. Dewey's use of the word "language" as a means of transformation of self-exposure into expression might be used in its broader sense of all the media of art works, not confined to the verbal one. Appreciated in this vein, the resemblance theory of expression is presumably rejected. Dewey's rejection of Wordsworthian spontaneity and "overflow" ("boiling over") in the aesthetic process of expression what he calls the transformation of the natural exposures, when compared with Langer's notion of transformation as symbolization (or linguistic metaphorization) renders expression virtually as an act of metaphorization implying the linguistic paradigm of this concept. Along this line one might distinguish between the linguistic view of representation as denotation or conventional signification and expression as metaphorical signification,

putting the former in the syntagmatic and the latter in the paradigmatic levels of language. If so, then expression theory short of its subjective linkage with the artist is readily acceptable by the formalists and structuralists as a valid theory of art putting aside the mass of philosophical analyses of the different problems and related aspects of expression such as communication and expressiveness. The communicative aspect of expression remains no more specific with expression because in their linguistic paradigms both representation and expression are communicative in their own modes and a search for the expressiveness for justifying expression in art, or understanding art as expression, appears redundant. But the linguists do use "expressive" communication in a specific sense that is discussed below in its proper context.

George Santayana offers a theory of expression in terms of 'fused' association of two important features of expression: a public display of thought and feeling that is value-loaded:

> Indeed if expression were constituted by the external relation of object with object everything would be expressive equally, indeterminately ... Expression depends upon the union of two terms, one of which must be furnished by imagination; and a mind cannot furnish what it does not possess... But for an expression to be an element of beauty, it must, of course, fulfil another condition... Not until I confound the impressions, and suffuse the symbols themselves with the emotions they arouse and find joy and sweetness in the very words I hear. (Rader 1973: 187-188)

This theory of expression, the theory that recognition of expression is a response, in some way, to an object, leads to an affective theory of expression that regards communication as the sole object of expression by which the audience is expected to be affected in some way. That is to say, the expressiveness of expression is successful only when it casts an impact on the audience so that he responds to the expression expectedly. Santayana's purport appears clear despite his failure to explain sufficiently the idea of "fusion"—the way exactly these two features are "fused".

Ludwig Wittgenstein proposes a very persuasive form of expression, a non-linguistic notion of linguistic cognition that functions by pictorial representation of a proposition: "A proposition is a picture of reality: for if I understand a proposition, I know the situation that it represents. And I understand the proposition without having had its sense explained to me": (*Tractatus*, 4.021) The several other sections in the *Tractatus* that plead for this representational theory of linguistic meaning (such as 4.01, 4.011, 4.1, 4.11, 4.121) in terms of pictorial function are not compatible with the Peircean function of an iconic

sign, because Wittgenstein makes it sufficiently clear that a proposition in representing a state of affair does not *resemble* it as a picture *displays* its object: "In a proposition a thought finds an expression that can be perceived by the senses". (3.1) A proposition does not display, but depicts logically, *shows* the logical form of its object/reality: "The possibility of all imagery, of all our pictorial modes of expression, is contained in the 'logic of depiction'." (4.015)

But, at the same time, Wittgenstein also believes in non-representational (non-linguistic) cognitions where things make themselves manifest: "There are indeed things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are mystical." (6.522) "It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words. Ethics is transcendental. (Ethics and aesthetics are one and the same.)" (6.421) Influenced by the Viennese cultural critic Karl Kraus, Wittgenstein holds that the semantic property of the artworks like literature, painting and architecture is not representational or pictorial without any referential function. In terms of Fregean semantics, they are senseless, they cannot be said. Drawing upon Schopenhauer, along with Kraus, Wittgenstein holds that artworks embody an attitude to life with ethical ramifications. (Lurie: 93) This embodiment is not a representation, but manifestation of a sign that is neither iconic, nor indexical. As it appears, in Wittgenstein's understanding, none of the Peircean signs can be considered an artwork if it functions referentially or representationally, nor even metaphorically. Embodiment or manifestation is self-validated. It neither refers nor resembles; it is the self-contained presentation of the truth itself and as such it can be understood as an expression of reality in opposition to representation by way of logical depiction or Peircean/Saussurean signification. Representation is therefore phenomenal and expression is transcendental as it transcends the limitations of world and language that depicts it logically: "What expresses *itself* in language, we cannot express by means of language" (4.121) An artwork, according to this declaration of Wittgenstein, is not a means for communicating any thing external to or other than itself. There is no subject- predicate structure in the language of artworks: the subject is, as it were, predicate itself. In other words the subject is manifested / expressed as predicate in the language of artworks where the language is itself its own meaning, an idea that eliminates both the denotational and metaphorical functions of language in the context of meaning in artworks.

III

Edmund Husserl's "Transcendental Phenomenology" treats the notion of expression in a way radically different from that of the subjective idealism of Croce. In his view, representation and expression are two different functions of two different levels of consciousness. Although Husserl's writings are difficult, and even cumbersome at times, his ideas appear refreshingly noteworthy in challenging his predecessors. His phenomenology rejects the psychologism, physicalism and scientism of the empiricists, subjective idealists and logical positivists in formulating a non-psycholoigical doctrine of consciousness that negates all kinds of subject-object dichotomy. Husserl's consciousness differs from Descartes' subject and Locke's mind that are independent of the external phenomenal world. Instead, his 'consciousness' is consciousness of something. There is no external world of objects, facts and events unless they appear in the consciousness, nor is there an empty consciousness, a Lockean *tabula rasa*, without being occupied with and absorbed by things or objects. The phenomenological property of the act of consciousness is intentionality. The word intention is derived from the Latin verb *intentio* meaning to aim or stretch toward something— the form-in-mind intends the form-in-object. In 1874 Brentano the teacher of Husserl revived this scholastic notion of intention which was further elaborated by his student Kassimir Therdowski in 1894 drawing sharp distinction among act, content and object of (re)presentation (*Vorstellung*).

In Husserl's treatment intentionality of consciousness comprises four factors—directedness toward the object, interpretedness of the object presented to consciousness, constitution of the object meant and interrelatedness of the various facts of intentional life. Upon this intentional makeup of consciousness depends the whole range of the system of signs—the various relations between the symbol and the symbolized—the areas of mathematics, natural language, formal logic and the arts. The basic structure of consciousness is the intentional arc of knower (*noēsis*) and known (*noēma*). Significantly, in such a structure of consciousness, perceptual knowledge, meaning and signification are organically correlated with the intentional act of consciousness. All knowledge is basically perceptual, all that is known is necessarily meant because meaning or signification is a necessary function of intention, and what is meant is interpreted. An unconscious or pre-conscious world can be admitted of, but nothing can be *meant*, *known about, for* and *toward* it.

The data of consciousness are reduced to two regions, those of *eidoi* (*eidos*/idea/form/essence) and *epoché* (transcendental), and consciousness is functionally stratified to four levels- somatic, psychic, logical and transcendental. The first three are the strata of signification in the first sphere: (a) the sign functions

by way of only physical gestures or indication (*Zeichen/Anzeichen*) such as pointing to an object by finger or crying of a baby indicating hunger; (b) the sign functions by way of expression (*Ausdruck*) in the second sphere such as using a word for the desired object i.e. the linguistic signification; (c) the third is the sphere of intra-relations of signs. The purely logical relations of non-contradiction such as the proposition of identity A≡A; and the outermost transcendental sphere transcendents all these signifying functions where the world is revealed in its wholeness—the life-world (*Lebenswelt*), the irreducible patterns of the subject's existence such as spatiality, temporality and inter-subjectivity that underlie the life of the cultural world in all its diversities.

Husserl's distinction between indication and expression refers to two distinct modes of signification. "[An index is] a sign", as Charles Peirce points out, "or representation, which refers to its object not so much because of any similarity or analogy with it, nor because it is associated with several characters which that object happens o possess, as because it is in dynamical (including spatial) connection both with the individual object, on the one hand, and with the senses of memory of the person for whom it serves as a sign, on the other hand... Indices may be distinguished from other signs, or representations, by three characteristic marks: first, that they have no significant resemblance to their objects; second, that they refer to individuals, single units, single collections of unit, or single continua; third, that they direct the attention to their objects by blind compulsion ... psychologically the action of indices depends upon association by contiguity, and not upon association by resemblance or upon intellectual operations ... A sundial or a clock *indicates* the time of day. A low barometer with a moist air is an index of rain." (Innis 1985: 12-14) Smoke indicates fire.

An indexical sign is, therefore, necessarily associated with its signified by way of causation or otherwise. Disjunctive propositions are also indications. One might say, "If A and B are married to one another and C is their child while D is brother of A, then D is uncle of C. A rap on the door is an index. So denotative pronouns and other words which call the attentions of the hearer to aspects of the immediate situation are indexes." (Innis, 13)

Commenting on Peirce, John Lyons observes that his followers do not use the terms "index", "indexical" and "indicate" as generally as he has done. Charles Morris, for example, uses the term "identifier" for the signs that signify location in space and time, and "indicators" for non-linguistic signals. Similarly, Abercrombie uses the term "indices" to refer to "signs which reveal personal characteristics of the writer or speaker". On the other hand, some philosophers such as Bar-Hillel use the word "indexical" for demonstrating the truth-value of the sentences that are context-dependent, varying therefore from occasion to occa-

sion. "This philosophical use of 'indexical' seems to derive from the fact that Pierce applied it to demonstrative pronouns and other words which call the attention of the hearer to aspects of the immediate situation."

Lyons further observes that an alternative term for Peirce's "indexical", common in the linguistic, psychological and ethological literature is "expressive", particularly in the vocabulary of Russian Formalism and Prague structuralism the schools of thought immensely influenced by Karl Bühler the German semanticist. But Lyons thinks it wise to restrict the term "expressive" to those indexical features of an utterance by means of which a speaker or writer establishes or reveals his individuality in a particularly original means. Expressivity, in this sense, will therefore be a part of creativity. (Lyons 1977: 106-107)

IV

In distinguishing expression from indication Husserl holds that expression or an expressive sign carries meaning; and in understanding the nature of this meaning one has to correlate three factors—expression or the physical signs, mental act or the intention of the speaker or the sign (expression)—user and the objects referred to. Husserl, thus, uses expression in its total performance. An expression will carry meaning only where all the three factors are taken into consideration. He therefore, does not consider language as an arbitrary system of signs:

> Expressions were originally framed to fulfill a communicative function ... The ... sign ... first becomes a spoken word or communicative bit of speech, when a speaker produces it with the intention of "expressing himself about something" through its means, he must endow it with a sense in certain acts of mind, a sense he derives to share with his auditors, such sharing becomes a possibility, if the author also understands the speaker's intention. He does this in as much as he takes the speaker to be a person, who is not merely uttering sounds but speaking to him, who is accompanying those sounds with certain sense–giving acts, which the sounds reveal to the hearer, or whose sense they seek to communicate to him. (Smith 1999: 109)

Avicenna, Aristotle's Arabic interpreter names the mental form of the perceptual experience *ma'ná* that means "meaning" or "message". Its medieval Latin translation *intentio* means to "aim at" or "stretch toward", particularly the material form counter to the mental form of the perceptual experience. In Husserl's phenomenology the exteriorization of expression is only metaphorical – "forced", because whereas Husserl is aware that expression is meant originally for communication, he intends to use it as an intentional act, an immediate (perceptual)

self experience that does not need any utterance or play any communicative role:

> We shall lay down, for provisional intelligibility, that all speech (*Rede*) and every part of speech (*Redeil*), as also each sign that is essentially of the same sort, shall count as an expression, whether or not such speech is actually uttered (*wirklich geredet*) or addressed with communicative intent to any persons or not. (Derrida 1973: 34)

For Husserl, the physicality of meaning—the utterance of speech, the empirical language is foreign to the nature of expression as such, an act of pure intention or voluntary consciousness. Husserl's semiotic categories are not therefore two different sorts of categories—linguistic and non-linguistic as noted in traditional semiotics of Pierce or Bühler. Both indication and expression are the categories of the linguistic signs. But expression is used for the pure sense (without a necessary reference) regarded as the intentional or voluntary consciousness as distinguished from the in-voluntary associations of indication. The pressing-out of expression is not any empirical exteriorization of meaning.

Expression is an act of pure consciousness whereas indication is a factual totality. All the behavioural gestures including facial expressions are excluded from "expression", i.e. they are not expressive signs. They accompany speech involuntarily without communicative intent. Also, "utterances" (*Äußerungen*) are not expressions in the sense in which a case of speech (*Rede*) is an expression, they are not phenomenally one with the experiences made manifest in them in the consciousness of the man who manifests them, as is the case with speech. In such manifestations one man communicates nothing to another: Their utterance involves no intents to put certain thoughts on record expressively (*in ausdrücklicher Weise*), whether for the man himself, in his solitary state, or for others. Such "expressions", in short, have, properly speaking, *no meaning: (Bedeutung)*. "What Husserl affirms concerning gestures and facial expressions would certainly hold *a fortiori* for preconscious or unconscious language". (Derrida 1973: 35) Husserl distingushes between expression and communication. In communication sensible phenomena such as audible and visible are animated through the sense giving act of a subject; and animation cannot be pure and complete because of its passing through the opaqueness of a body. "This manifesting function (*kundgebende Funktion*) is an indicative function: indication takes place wherever the sense giving act the animating intention, the living spirituality of the meaning intention, is not fully present." (Derrida 1973: 38) It is also understood, by Husserl, that only in the solitary mental (or even spiritual) life the pure unity of expression as such is restored. This purity of expression is lost in

manifestation/communication/intimation/dialogue, even self-communication or soliloquy where one speaks to oneself, uses words as signs as indications of one's own inner experience.

Jacques Derrida remarks that "despite the initial distinction between an indicative sign and an expressive sign only an indication is truly a sign for Husserl." (Derrida 1973: 42) Expression differs from indication in so far as an indication is an empirically perceived sign, so also a communicative expression used or experienced in soliloquy is non-existent empirically. Indication is an empirical mediation of expression. Therefore the words used in expression are not verbal signs used as utterance or script. They are only imaginary representations (*vorgestellt / Phantasie*). And, as such, for Husserl, expression is distinguished from indication which is an inferential experience. Expression is perception of an ideal or primordial presence, and Derrida would insist that this primordial presence is a continuous presentation or representative reproduction, and the perceptuality of expression is always indeterminate in which regard it differs from the determinate sense-perception of the external world. The distinction between expression and indication, however, as Derrida observes, is more functional than substantial:

> Indication and expression are functions or signifying relations, not terms. One and the same phenomenon may be apprehended as an expression or as an indication, a discursive or non-discursive sign depending on the intentional experience (*véw intentionnel*) which animates it. (1973: 23)

Derrida wisely observes that Husserl does not base his distinction between indication and expression as two heterogenous signs on any definition of "sign" (*Zeigen*) in general, although this sign "is the place where the root and necessity of all 'interweaving' of indication and expression is manifested." (1973: 24)

Accordingly, for Husserl, indication is a representational signification whereas expression is non-representational, and he prefers expressive reference (*Hinzeigen*) to indicative reference (*Anzeigen*) in his search for "logical character of signification, for a *logical a priori* of pure grammar in the general *a priori* of grammar". Further, Husserl's notion of ideality and stability of meaning evident in its unchanged individual instances can be reduced to only re-presentations paving the way for dismissal of difference between *Ausdruck* and *Vorstellung*.

Derrida's detailed critique of Husserl's notion of expression and its difference from indication deserves attention for an understanding of the phenomenological concept of expression: "Ex-pression is exteriorization. It imparts to a certain outside a sense which is first focused in a certain inside." (Derrida 1973: 32) But according to the basic phenomenological argument there is practically

no outside, no world, no nature without being experienced in/by the consciousness that is intentional in the sense of being directed toward an object. Consciousness is consciousness of something, where this "something" is not an outside factual reality. This "something" can be anything other than natural, may be fiction, a phantasy, a hallucination. The phenomenologist must adopt a "transcendental" rather than a "natural" attitude. Nothing is given outside prior to its experience in the consciousness which is "pure" or transcendental in the sense that it is abstracted from or is independent of the world of outward nature.

Although intimation and communication are raison d'être of expressions, what is essential for their use is their meaningfulness: "when we live in the understanding of a word, it expresses something, and the same thing whether we address it to anyone or not". (Smith 195: 109) Speech is not mere utterances of sounds, nor is expression necessarily an utterance. Whereas indication is a thinking about something, expression is an act of endowing a meaning to the thought which is an idea that cannot be identified spatiotemporally. Husserl uses the German words Bedeutung and Vorstellung for meaning and idea respectively. These ideas are neither mental states nor the objects of the phenomenal world or perception. They are logical entities on which the validity of linguistic function is founded. It is this idea which is the meaning of an expression, and is represented by a sign or physical utterance. Only expressions have meaning-content. Husserl writes: "To use an expression significantly, and to refer expressively to an object are one and the same." (Smith 1995: 19) Meaning acts are of two types—associated with uses of names and with uses of sentences: "Each meaning either a nominal meaning or a propositional meaning, or still more precisely either the meaning of a complete sentence or possible part of such a meaning" (ibid.)—both the types remain ideal or logical entities inasmuch as it involves nothing subjective or individual, "neither arises nor passes away. It is an identity in the strict sense, one and the same geometrical truth". (Smith 1995: 111) This mathematical pattern of the ideality of meaning argues for a Platonic idealism of cognitive foundation. Meaning, thus redeemed of subjectivity, attains an intersubjective status. Paradoxically, therefore, while refusing to accept intimation or communication as a necessary function of expression, Husserl states: "Each expression not merely says something but says it of something: it not only has a meaning, but refers to certain objects... But the object never coincides with the meaning... Every expression intimates something, means something and names or otherwise designates something." (ibid.)

Barry Smith and David Smith explain:

We can talk of "the same" meaning from speaker to speaker and from occasion to occasion in virtue of the fact that numerically different individual moments of meaning in the relevant acts serve to instantiate identical species. Indeed to assert that two individual objects or events instantiate one and the same species is simply to assert that the objects or events in question manifest among themselves a certain qualitative identity of real parts of moment—that they are, in this or that respect, the same. (Smith 1995: 20)

Derrida observes that Husserl holds a linguistic model of expression, since, according to him, expression is the telos or essence of language, and logical meaning is an act of expression: "Thus everything must be capable of being said, everything must be capable of allowing the conceptual generality which properly constitutes the logic of the logos". Husserl thus presupposes a pre-expressive noema, the prelinguistic sense (the logos) that must be imprinted in the expressive noema. Obviously expression now appears as a transportation of a constituted sense to the exterior, "and by the same token to bring this sense to conceptual generality without altering it, in order to express what is already thought (one almost would have to say written), and in order to redouble faithfully—expression then must permit itself to be imprinted by sense at the same time it expresses sense."

Derrida accuses Husserl of falling a victim to the metaphysics of presence. In transporting the already constituted sense, what is already thought/written, expression appears as a function of representation—representing the presence (logos). Husserl's proposal for presenting a self-consisted notion of expression without involving any exteriorization remains unaccomplished—Ausdruck turns virtually to be Vorstellung. Husserl's proposal would have been accomplished, Derrida argues, only if the two strata —Being as being—present in the form of meaning (bedeuten) and Being as being— present in the preexpressive form of sense (Sinn)—could be thought of being related in the category of expression. "Speech represents itself; it is its representation. Even better, speech is the representation of itself." (1973: 57) However, despite Derrida's meticulous criticism, Husserl's treatment of expression, its specific sign-function in the psychic stratum of consciousness, remains most distinguished in the conceptual history of expression.

A remarkably fresh dimension was attributed to Ausdruck (Expression) by Wilhelm Dilthey, a senior contemporary of Husserl in his hermeneutics of history. Anticipating Thomas Eliot's notion of "unification of sensibility", Dilthey rescued human experience (Erlebnis) from its empirical reduction, from the epistemology of representation as well as from its subjective confinement in Romantic epistemology that he consistently opposed. According to him Erlebnis is

trans subjective and, therefore, its epistemological validity is beyond the particu-larizing emotionalist guise of the Romantic author's subjective experience. In his "descriptive and analytical psychology" *Erlebnis* is not confined to any psychologism or to a particular context of its origin, or what Eliot called the genetic source of a Romantic author. Dilthey writes:

> There is no real blood flowing in the veins of the knowing subject fabricated by Locke, Hume and Kant, but only the diluted juice of reason as mere intellectual activity. But dealing with the whole man—in the multiplicity of his powers: this willing—feeling—perceiving—as the basis for explaining knowledge and its concepts (such as outer world, time, substance, cause), even though to be sure, knowledge appears to weave these concepts solely out of raw material it gets from perceiving, imaging and thinking. (*Introduction to the Human Sciences*, 73)

Erlebnis of Dilthey's "whole man" is the totality of man's knowledge by all its means such as perception, inference, testimony, analogy and memory, and simultaneously, all others that go beyond these means. It "is a distinctive and characteristic mode in which reality is there–for-me; it is not given to me but the reality of lived experience is there-for-me, because I have a reflexive awareness of it because I possess it immediately as belonging to me in some sense" ("Fragments for a Poetics", *Selected Works*, vol. 5, 223). Unlike Croce, Dilthey holds that meaning is not located in the interiority of the subjects, but in the "objective spirit" the result of the individual endeavors, precisely, in the "objectification" or *Ausdruck* (Expression) of the *Erlebnis* that contains the teleological intentions of their authors. "Lived experience" (*Erlebnis*), Dilthey writes, "generates its own expressions" that includes verbal and non-verbal signs, linguistic utterances, physical gestures (body language) both actions and facial grimaces, there being mediated by "world views" (*Weltanshaungen*), patterns of understanding (interpreting) life. He writes to Goethe:

> The human world exists for the poet in so far as he experiences human existence in himself and tries to understand it as it confronts him from the outside... in understanding he projects all his inner experience into other human beings, and yet at the same time the unfathomable alien depths of another great being or a powerful destiny lead him beyond the limits of his own; he understands and gives shape to what he would never be able to experience personally. ("Poetry and Experience", 278)

The world views that mediate the *Ausdruck* of *Erlebnis* are typified by Dilthey into three categories: positivism (realism with the predominance of intellect: e.g. Democritus, Lucretius, Hobbes and Modern Materialists), objective idealism

(with the predominance of feeling; e.g., Heraclitus, Spinoza, Leibniz, Schelling, Hegel) and dualistic idealism or "Idealism of Freedom" (with the predominance of will; e.g., Plato, Christian theologians, Kant and Fichte). "The first group explains the spiritual by the physical world, the second sees reality as the expression of an internal reality and does not recognize a conflict between being and value, the third assumes the independence of spirit against nature." Balzac and Stendhal represent the first type, Goethe the second and Schiller the third. (Wellek and Warren 1976: 117)

V

Husserl's phenomenological method has been substantially effective in structuring the ideas of Martin Heidegger, Jean Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Martin Heidegger's views on language and linguistic function are reflected in his *Being and Time* (Section 34) and the three essays—"The way to Language", "The Word" and "The Essence of Language"—where he has eliminated the notion of linguistic function and nature of meaning provided by the traditional philosophy of language. Language does not function as a tool for communication: "Language is not one of the means by which consciousness is mediated with the world—(and) by no means simply an instrument, a tool." (Clark 1992: 14) Language is a quasi-holistic field that cannot be objectified, precisely because it provides the precondition and medium of any such objectification. Heidegger distinguishes between saying (*Sage*)/discourse (*Rede*) and speech (*Sprechen*): "With regard to the manifold ties of saying (*Sagen*) we shall call the essence of language in its totality *die Sage* ..." that is different from *speech* the physical utterance made by man. Language-in-itself precedes speech and originates in silence. "Language *speaks*: This means at the same time and before all else: *language* speaks. Language? And not man? ... If we must, therefore, seek the speaking of language in what is spoken we shall do well to find something that is spoken purely rather than to pick just any spoken material at random. What is spoken purely is that in which the completion of speaking that is proper to what spoken is, in its turn, an original. What is spoken purely is the poem." (*Poetry*, 194, 198)

Heidegger's purport, as it appears, is that it is in the poetic language, i.e., in the language of metaphor that language is *purely* spoken. By way of illustration he cites a poem "A Winter Evening" by Georg Trakl. The way of language to (pure) speech is a transformation of silence to metaphors. In other words, language itself is a metaphor carried beyond communicative or informative dialogue, otherwise called speech, and the transformation of language is not a press

ing out or ex-pression but an *aletheia*, an uncovering a revelation or manifesta-
tion, the pressed-out is the pressed itself, if at all one insists upon using the word
"expression" used for "speech" in the vocabulary of general linguistics. Heideg-
ger also correlates two other words *Logos* and *Ereignis* with *aletheia*. The Greek
word *Logos* is used by Heidegger both for Being and for the totality of language,
"the oldest word for the rule of the word," meaning perhaps an archetypal mode
or model of language, and by using the German word *Ereignis* he refers to
aletheia.

Pierre Thevenaz interprets Heidegger's notion of Being in its correlation
with his notion of language—the structure of Being and the structure of lan-
guage are identical. He considers that Heidegger's Being is "conceived as a kind
of obscure and hidden power, that consents to manifest itself, that makes out
itself the place of its opening, that condescends thus to give itself to man, like a
kind of grace, to come out of itself, to express itself, to make itself meaningful
... Being opens, exteriorizes, expresses itself ... that precisely which speaks is no
longer man; it is Being. It sends forth a cry into the desert in order to stimulate
the echo which will send back its solitary Word. It is Being that creates for itself
the ear, destined to hear and the words that carry its revelation." (1962: 60-61)

The Greek *aletheia* ("The hidden being which reveals itself", *Unverborgen-
theit*) seems to be the key concept in Heidegger's thought that explains the na-
ture of both Being and language in their identical function of perpetual self-
revelation. Poetry as the "pure speech" is self-revealed, and the mastery of a mas-
terful poem "consists precisely in this that the poem can deny the poet's person
and name". (*PLT*: 195) Human existence is basically a poetic experience, "poeti-
cally man dwells", Heidegger quotes Hölderlin his favorite poet. Man does not
shape and master language, "while in fact language remains the master of man
when this relation of dominance gets inverted, man hits upon strange maneuvers.
Language becomes the means of expression. As expression, language can decay
into a mere medium for the printed word." The true relation between language
and man is that "it is language that speaks. Man first speaks when, and only
when, he responds to language by listening to its appeal." (*PLT*: 216) Contrary
to Romantic poetics, Heidegger holds that poetry does not generate in a poet, a
poet only responds to the self-revelation of language in form of poetry that is *sui
generis*. Thus the dualism between expression and expressed is fused into the
holistic experience of language itself, so also the role of the expressing agency is
neutralized.

Among the French phenomenologists Maurice Merleau-Ponty appears to be
the most important thinker who has contributed significantly to the debate over
the conceptual issues of expression in its multifarious perspectives. He draws
heavily on the German phenomonalogists Husserl and Heidegger in dealing with
the "things themselves" not as the objective facts and events of the (external)
world of phenomena, but as the phenomena toward which the intentional con-
sciousness is directed, the givens of experience. But he is equally interested in
entertaining complementarity between philosophy and social sciences. There-
fore, he is critical of the idealism of a "pure consciousness" in his preference to
the structures of significations that the newly evolving social sciences offered
him. Already by 1951 Merleau-Ponty was influenced by the structuralist linguis-
tics of Ferdinand de Saussure, and after his break with Jean Paul Sartre in 1952,
he was closely associated with the structuralist anthropology of Claude Levi-
Strauss, without washing off the marks of Sartrean Marxism completely. Side by
side, his concern with gestalt and behavioural psychology as also with Freudian
Psychoanalysis was no less. One can, therefore, imagine the vast area of Merleau-
Ponty's intellectual awareness that shaped his unique contributions to the phe-
nomenology of language and epistemology that reformulated the key ideas of
ontology, perception, meaning and expression reflected in his three major works
The Structure of Behaviour, *Phenomenology of Perception* and *Signs*.

Merleau-Ponty rejects the subject-object dichotomy and the possibility of
"certainty" as sought for by Descartes, the empiricists and the Anglo-American
analysts. He rejects the Behaviourist causal explanations of human behaviour,
the one-to-one correlation of the external stimulus with response of body. Body
is not a passive object in contrast to the subject or mind/consciousness which is
active. In an effort for overcoming both subjectivism/idealism and material-
ism/Marxism, Merleau-Ponty states that if man cannot be understood apart
from the world he lives/exists in, 'the World' also cannot be understood apart
from the meaning conferred on it—apart from as it is perceived/ experienced by
man. Similarly, the human body being itself a subject, is in a constant dialogue
with the world and with other persons. It is not that there is in the body a dis-
tinct soul or spirit in virtue of which the composite being is described as a sub-
ject, it is the body which is subject. The human body is one reality which is ma-
terial and spiritual simultaneously. There is no reductionsim in reducing one into
the other. It is not that mental activities at the level of consciousness constitute a
mental life and are subsequently projected in physical behaviour which is purely
corporeal devoid of consciousness. Rather these activities presuppose the body-
subject. Physical behaviour is a mode of existence that cannot be described with-
out reference to the specific human capacity to attribute meanings to the world,
and only human beings can attribute this meaning by manifesting "symbolic
forms". Human behaviour cannot be interpreted simply as a mechanistic re-
sponse of the body to its environment or the external stimulus. Human behav-

iour cannot be compared just with any material reactions in physics and chemistry in terms of mechanistic reciprocal causality because this behaviour exhibits "subjectivity", though, in a pre-conscious level, man's *lived* experience is a dialectical relationship between the human organism and its environment, because this organism is always already a being-in-the world. Man changes along with the changes in the environment, but this change is not only an effect of the charges in the environment, because man's active responses determine the meaning of the stimulus itself. That is to say, the dialectical relationship is perpetually active, and it is within this dialogue that "the world" comes to appear as long as the body-subject exists.

Having thus (almost) settled the man (body-subject)-world (environment) relationship, Merleau-Ponty proceeds to explain the mode of man's experience of the world, and he asserts that this mode is perceptual (experience). But this perception is distinguished from the perception of the epistemological vocabulary—a knowledge by sense-object contact that raises the issues of certainty and illusion. For Merleau-Ponty, perception is man's experience of his lived-existence, his very behaviour in the dialogue with the environment. There is no world beyond what man perceives as the world, what is presented to his consciousness (by subject) as the world. Man is both a perceptible and perceiving reality. Thus, "Perception is always ambiguous, partly subjective, partly 'transcendental', going beyond the immediate present into a future... since a body is a particular spatial object, occupying a certain position in space, all perception and all awareness is from a certain spatial point, and offers to other points in space. In the same way, perception is also necessarily perception at a particular time and it refers to time past and time to come". (Warnock 85-87) Following the Husserlian model of time, Merleau-Ponty suggests a continuous process of perception without any possible completion. The ambiguity of perception is equally indeterminate. If time is a continuous and infinite process, and the body-subject perceives (experiences) the whole world (environment) of which it is a part then man's perceptual behaviour is also conscious out of which all its undertakings come up. As a result, man's existential (or transcendental existence) position is inter-subjective, for "we are mixed up with the world and with others in an inextricable confusion." (Thevenaz 86) Human life, like the continuous perceptual world—infinite and ambiguous—is also itself ambiguous without any determinate telos. Merleau-Ponty agrees with Husserl: the phenomenological approach is essentially an indefinite and infinite dialogue or meditation that remains faithful to its intention- it will never know where it is going, "The incompleteness of phenomenology and its inchoative appearance are not the signs of failure; they are inevitable because the sense of phenomenology is to reveal the mystery of the world and the mystery of reasons". (*ibid.*, 87) The world as man's intersubjective perceptual experience is an open and unachieved system.

From perception, Merleau-Ponty comes to the issue of meaning and signification as he uses both the intention of man's perception and the function of language for understanding and communication. Perception is giving meaning which is, like perception itself, ambiguous and mixed-up with non-meaning. It is the fundamental Logos already present in our original relation to the world, and this Logos is a general phenomenon: there is meaning, but not a meaning, and always mixed-up with nonmeaning this meaning is paradigmatically a paradox in so far as all our perceptual experience of our lived-existence is as meaningful as meaningless. The operation of meaning or signification according to Merleau-Ponty, is "expression" not "representation." The process of signification is a perceptual experience that gives or expresses a meaning to the world we perceive not as external to our perception but the very act of our perception. Therefore, there is no thought or act in our consciousness which is not perceived or does not signify/express meaning. Although Merleau-Ponty does not distinguish between indication and expression, like Husserl, he holds linguistic signification as an act of expression that is essentially perceptual, not inferential; and as both perception and meaning are ambiguous and indefinite, expression as signification is also ambiguous, indefinite and incomplete. So also is communication. By rejecting dualism of mind and body, Merleau-Ponty rejects the dualism of thought and language. The objectivity of language as a system in common possession of a given society is never a complete one, because the "spoken word" (language) is continuously being added by the "speaking word" of the subject-poets and orators, and continue to contribute to the linguistic system - both the vocabulary and sentential uses, unendingly. Thought of subject never precedes language. It is itself shaped and structured by the very structure of language that expresses or gives it meaning: Thought 'in the speaking subject is not a representation, that is, it does not posit objects or relations. The orator does not think before speaking, nor even while speaking; his speech is his thought."

Merleau-Ponty's notion of linguistic expression is (rather paradoxically) based on the model of "aesthetic expression". He writes:

> Aesthetic expression confers on what it expresses an existence in itself (*en soi*), installs it in nature as a thing perceived and accessible to all, or conversely plucks the signs themselves—the person of the actor, or the colours and canvas of the painter—from their empirical existence and bears them off into another world. No one will claim that here the process of expression brings the meaning into being or makes it effective, and does not merely translate it. (*PP*, 183)

In this context, Merleau-Ponty formulates a phenomenological semiotics which, he thinks, explains both the semiotics of art and language. Following Husserl, he distinguishes between indexical signs and aesthetic/linguistic signs. Speech is not a sign of thought in the way smoke is the sign of fire. In other words, smoke *indicates* fire, but speech *expresses* thought in the sense of embodiment or manifestation where both are inseparable *organically*. The sign embodies the signified, does not *represent* it in the sense of indexical standing-for. Similarly, speech does not *represent* thought, because speech is the thought:

> We find here beneath the conceptual meaning of the worlds, an existential meaning which is not only rendered by them, but which inhabits them and is inseparable from them. The greatest service done by expression is not to commit to writing ideas which might be lost ... The process of expression, where it is successful, does not merely leave for the reader and, the writer himself a kind of reminder, it brings the meaning into existence as a thing at the very heart of the text, it brings it to life in an organism of words, establishing it in the writer or the reader as a new sense organ, opening a new field or a new dimension to our experience. (*PP*, 182)

The organic nature of the process of expression which Merleau-Ponty enunciates is modeled on the centrality of the body-subject relationship both appearing in the expressing the lived-world of human consciousness. Along this line, expression is far from being "pressing out" of the Romantic humanism on the one hand, and from the conventionality of the structuralist semiotics on the other. Merleau-Ponty's structuralism is an organic system where the relationship between the signifier and the signified ceases to be arbitrary and conventional, and appears as organic as the structure of the body-subject. This relationship is certainly not a stable one; like any other organism the relationship is dialectical, prone to change and growth.

Merleau-Ponty does not agree with Aristotle or, for that matter, with any theorist who considers the means such as lines, colours, canvas, words, (musical) notes, the rhythms of a dancer, the performance of an actor, as also the artists themselves different from artworks that are produced by them. All these media factors taken together as the "signifiers" and the "artworks" as signified exist in inseparable organic entities:

> The musical meaning of a sonata is inseparable from the sounds which are its vehicle: before we have heard it no analysis enables us to anticipate it; once the performance is over, we shall, in our intellectual analyses of the music, be unable to do anything but carry ourselves back to the moment of experiencing it. During the performance, the notes are not only the "signs" of the sonata, but it is the same way the actress becomes invisible, and it is Phaedra who appears.

> The meaning swallows up the signs, and Phaedra has so completely taken possession of Berma that her passion as Phaedra appears the apotheosis of ease and naturalness. (*PP*, 182-183)

At the same time, as all perceptual behaviour of the body-subject is ambiguous, both the linguistic and aesthetic objects and their meanings also are ambiguous and indeterminate, as human existence itself is so. Culture never engenders absolutely transparent meanings—"the birth of meaning is never finalized." All language is indirect and allusive, thus, in a sense, is silence. This is particularly true of the original or authentic *Parole* in relation to secondary or empirical *Parole* and when the diachronic *langue* and synchronic *parole* are just opposed by Saussure as two irrevocably separated perspectives, the phenomenologist institutes a dialectic that is necessary for the organic growth of language itself. The aesthetic model of language is supplemented by the linguistic model of aesthetic expression as manifestation or revelation: (arguing very much like Wittgenstein) "... language is no longer an instrument, *no longer a means; it is a manifestation, a revelation of intimate being and of the psychic link which unites us to the world and our fellow men.*" (*PP*, 196) It is man's deepest essence "which is perhaps revealed nowhere so clearly, among civilization's creations, as in the creation of language itself." (*ibid.*) The privilege of language as expression/manifestation/revelation over other forms of expression, i.e., aesthetic, is, however, relative, and finally expression is not one of the curiosities that the mind can propose to examine, it is the mind's existence as act. Expression, understood along this line is not one of several modes of human activities, it is the very essence of man's existential consciousness.

Merleau-Ponty takes a different view of the nature of physical gestures which Husserl denied of any expressive value allotting them only indicative function. Merleau-Ponty says, "the body is a power of natural expression ... the human body is defined in terms of its property of appropriating, in an indefinite series of discontinuous acts, significant cores which transcend and transfigure its natural powers. This act of transcendence is first encountered in the acquisition of a pattern of behaviour, then in the mute communication of gesture: it is through the same power that the body opens itself to some new kind of conduct and makes it understood to external witness." (*PP*, 181,183)

When Merleau-Ponty argues for an absolute annihilation of subject-object/mind-body dualism, and his notion of perceptual behaviour discards all possibility of physical gestures in separation from the body-subject, gestures can be considered expressive, though mute. In fact, Merleau-Ponty's understanding of the theatrical performance as expression has already supported this view. But

his view of aesthetic expression is strikingly different from the views of the con-
temporary philosophers of art who consider the natural expression as the means
of aesthetic expressions—a sort of semiotic function of aesthetic expression. The
mirror model of Platonic and neo-classical representation is rejected by Merleau-
Ponty when he argues that a mirror reflects a material body only because a body
is visible—no invisible things can be visualized by a mirror, and in this rejection,
one understands the relative co-existence of the human essence itself. In per-
forming the role of Phaedra the actress Berma expresses Phaedra in so far as she
brings Phaedra into existence (en soi) in herself. The body of the artist (of all art
forms) is animated—"not the body as a chunk of space or a bundle of functions
but that body which is an intertwining of vision and movement." (Thompson:
417) Thus the actor's body is not a "second body" or the singer's notation a
duplicate notation, or the speaker's words echoes of words already spoken. The
signifier with all its perspectives is the signified, is perceived as signified, rather
than refers to or infers the signified. Merleau-Ponty refers to Cezanne's observa-
tions that a painter makes the portrait gaze as it does gaze. By using various
shades of colours an artist saddens the mouth (of a Portrait) or brings a smile to
its cheek (ibid.).

"This disclosure of an immanent or incipient significance in the living body
extends...to the whole sensible world, and prompted by the experience of our
own body, will discover in all other 'objects' the miracle of expression."(PP. 197)
When Merleau-Ponty says, "it is by lending his body to the world that the artist
changes the world into painting" (ibid.) he appears to fall a victim to the Roman-
tic subjectivism displacing the phrase "pressing-out his inner" by "lending his
body". But the inherent experience of intersubjectivity in his phenomenological
method, the artist's body that he 'lends' is not his individual physical existence.
His body as the body–subject is constituted by the phenomenal field of his exis-
tence that is expressed in his perceptual behaviour. The phenomenological ob-
servation cannot be reduced to any transparent language, indeed, because of the
ambiguity of human existence itself.

VI

Subjective idealism is objected in the semiotic and semantic conceptions of ex
pression. Already in 1900, earlier than Croce, Otto Dietrich the German linguist
emphasized the communicative function of (linguistic) expression: "For linguis-
tic science it is fundamental that language is an affair not merely of expression but
also of impression, that communication is of its essence, and that in its definition
it must not be overlooked." (Ogden and Richards, 231) Expression entails a
listener: "at least one other individual"; expression as the linguistic function is
meaningful only when its impression or effect upon a listener is tested: "Man
only understands himself when he has experimentally tested the intelligibility of
his words on others." (ibid.) The same is also apparently implied by the "lan-
guage circuit" of the French (Swiss) linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, (ibid.). But
although Saussure's Course begins with a discussion of the "Speech (language)—
circuit" "through a schematized dialogue between Mr. A and Mr. B, ultimately
these gentlemen are hypostasized social consciousness, two interchangeable
voices in a single monologue, two terminals whose semiotic input and output are
one." (Steiner, 1989: 223) Saussure's linguistics of langue is similar to the
Husserlian expressionist model of eidetic signification: "all expressions" to quote
once again, "in communicative speech functions as indication". Saussurean lin-
guistics is basically a type-token model of language where the individual utter-
ances are particular instances of a socially shared system-actualization of a po-
tential. Saussare's langue like Husserl's eidetic expression is, therefore, devoid of
any dialogical form or physical substance that shapes or constitutes parole, and
indication.

Husserl's phenomenology and Saussare's descriptive linguistics reached
Russia by 1915 when the Moscow Linguistic Circle was founded followed by the
Foundation of the Society for the Study of Poetic Language (OPOJAZ) in Pe-
tersburg the next year. Peter Bogatyrev and Roman Jakobson, two active foun-
der members of the Moscow Circle were immensely influenced by Husserl's
structure of consciousness comprising four strata and Saussure's view of lan-
guage as a system of sign with differential relations. Elmer Holenstein the Swiss
phenomenologist argues persuasively that Jakobson, in his mid-teens, during the
student days at Moscow, was deeply concerned with Husserl's eidetic phenome-
nology that proposed the grasp of the essential features common to objects of
the same category. Accordingly Jakobson believed that "the object of literary
science is not literature but literariness, i.e., what makes a given work a literary
work." (Steiner 1989: 201) This eidos, the essence is the first principle of his new
poetics, the "set (ustanovka) toward expression" that he designates the only fac-
tor for poetry. This principle is "phenomenological" because it defines poetry in

terms of a perceiver's mental set, following the basic premise of phenomenology that no object can be studied "in itself" excepting only as it is apperceived by an experiencing or observing subject. Peter Steiner argues that what is phenomenological in Jakobson is not the mental set alone but its qualification as the "set toward *expression*", an argument justified by Jakobson's suggestion that his method of literary study be called "expressionist". Obviously Jakobson's expressionism is radically Husserlian, not in any sense Crocean, neither pertaining to any other neo-Kantian/humanist notions of expression.

As noted earlier, Husserl's quest for eidetic signification was for the logical sign that would withstand the relativism inherent in natural semiotics. In dividing signs into two incompatible categories—indication (*Anzeichen*) and expression (*Ausdruck*)—Husserl asserts, the expressive sign is non-representational "essentially of the same sort" remaining self-same regardless of the spatiotemporal context. On the other hand, indicative sign is non-identical inasmuch as it corresponds to the vicissitudes of the phenomenal world: "In the case of a name", Husserl writes, "[for example] we distinguish between what it 'shows forth' (i.e., a mental state) and what it means. And again between what it means (the sense or 'content' of its naming presentation) and what it names (the object of that presentation)". (Steiner: 203) Both the "showing forth" and "naming" are unable to retain their sameness in repetition because they are contingent upon empirical reality. "Only the 'content of an expression's naming presentation', the 'meaning' (*Bedeutung*) of the linguistic sign is independent of the phenomenal context. It is therefore this lexical meaning inherent in the word prior to its representing other entities that endows the expression with its identity and distinguishes it from the indication." (*ibid.*)

Apart from Husserl, during 1917-1919, Jakobson was introduced to Saussure by the latter's pupil Sergej Karcevskij. Saussure was as effective as Husserl for the Moscow linguists, particularly Jakobson, because both of them were concerned with the identity of the linguistic sign—Husserl's was a logical identity, pure meaning of the expression, the *same* in all repetitions free from indicative relations that are subject to contextual changes. As such, expression merges with the subject's meaning-intention. But Husserl's expression as the intuitive presence in one's consciousnesses overcomes Croce's expression as subjective intuition because the former's intuition attains an intersubjective status, almost as a universal object like arithmetic numbers or geometrical figures, prior to the actualization of the sign. In an interior monologue the subject knows what he means by way of *expression*. His words do not serve him as indicators of his thought. Expression is thus pure meaning, not a representation by way of correspondence. This is exactly the case of Saussure's semiology—the signifier and

the signified (sound image and the concept) are basically mental phenomena in their un-uttered or non-physical form, retaining their identity in sensual, physical articulations. But, whereas Husserl is satisfied with the logical purity of sign, Saussure's concern with the social nature of language leads him to the difference between the potential (*langue*) and the actually spoken (*parole*) aspects of the sign. Because of the socially shared nature of the potential, its material form ought to differ without damaging, though, its identity. This identity is a function of the linguistic system: "*The true and unique object of linguistics is language studied in and for itself.*" (Steiner, 210)

There is yet a third influence on Jakobson—that of the German functionlism of Karl Bühler. In July 1920 Jakobson left Moscow for Prague with his colleague Peter Bogatyrev. In October 1926 the Prague linguistic circle was founded by five Czech and Russian linguists including Jakobson, with their founder chairman Vilém Mathesius, and in April 1929 Jan Mukarowsky joined the Steering Committee of the Circle subsequently representing it as one of the most prolific contributors that shaped the aims and objectives of this circle's intellectual growth. The members of the circle were intently against the programme of the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle that aimed at constructing "a scientific language whose precision would eliminate the previous errors of philosophy which they attributed to the ambiguities of natural language. The Prague linguists' object of study, in contrast, was cultural phenomena'." The positivists emphasized the logical aspects of language concentrating on signature whereas the Prague School emphasized the functional heterogeneity of language in its pragmatic and semantic aspects. (Steiner 1982: IX)

Karl Bühler, the Viennese linguist employed two German terms *Dastellung* (representation) and *Ausdruck* (expression) for distinguishing between two functions of language that correspond to the "descriptive" and "expressive" communications. Influenced by Edmund Husserl and scholastic tradition Bühler opposes a purely materialist theory of the linguistic sign. According to him the essential nature of sign does not reside in its "physical" reality, but in its "relational" reality. It is by the capacity of the sign-user that a particular set (*einstellung*) is endowed upon the material sign to besoul it with sense, i.e., enable it for its standing for function. Bühler discerns three functions of language—conative, representative and expressive, and uses the term indexical alternatively for expressive (Lyons suggests that "we can restrict the term 'expressive' to those indexical features of an utterance by means of which a speaker or writer establishes

lishes or reveals this individuality in a particularly original manner. Expressivity, in this sense, will therefore be a part of creativity." (107)[3]

Bühler's linguistic function oriented the speech events toward the receiver, referent and the sunder respectively. Speech events, according to Bühler, involve all these three functions in an hierarchical order where the speech event is characterized according to the dominant function. In most cases the referential function predominates whereas in other cases the other two functions are foregrounded. In addition to the schemata of Bühler a fourth function is proposed by Mukarowsky—the *aesthetic* function that is oriented toward the linguistic sign itself: "in opposition to all the others: it renders the structure of the linguistic sign the center of the attention, whereas the first three functions were oriented toward extralinguistic factors and toward goals transcending the linguistic sign." (Dolezel, 150). On the other hand, from the scheme of Bühler, Jakobson formulates a schema of language communication consisting of six factors—addresser, addressee, message, context (referent), contact (channel) and code as well as six functions—emotive, conative, poetic, referential, phatic and metalingual. Jakobson agrees with Bühler that there is a hierarchy in the polyfunctionality of linguistic communication. The 'message', factor otherwise translated as 'expression' corresponds to the 'poetic' function, and therefore asserts, "the set (*Einstellng*) toward the message/expression (*Ausdruck*) as such, focus on the message /expression for its own sake... poetry which is nothing but an utterance, *set toward the expression*, is governed by its own immanent laws." (Steiner, 1984: 204)

By converting the logical category of Husserlian expression to a functional (aesthetic poetic) category of expression Jakobson rejected the transrational theory of poetic language propounded by early OPOJAZ as also avoided slipping into "the pre-Formalist notion of the literary work as an undisturbed mirror of either the poet's soul or the social reality it depicted. With the expression-

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[3] Following Bühler, Rudolf Carnap, the influential logical enpiricist of the Vienna circle, distinguishes between "expressive" and "representational" functions of propositions in his *Philosophy and Logical Syntaxe* (1935):

> Metaphysical propositions—like lyrical verses—have only an expressive function, but no representative function. Metaphysical propositions are neither true nor false, because they assert nothing, they contain neither knowledge nor error, they lie completely outside the field of knowledge, of theory, outside the discussion of truth or falsehood. They are like laughing, lyrics and music expressive. (Adams and Searle (ed.), *Critical Theory since Platon*, Boston, 2005, 978-79)

ist model Jakobson could deny that the artwork was a mere psychological or sociological document without implying that it was therefore devoid of meaning." (Steiner 1984: 205)

Both Jakobson and Mukarowsky are subject to Derrida's attack for their adoption of the Husserlian eidetic meaning and the notion of expression (as distinguished from the "indication", the Aristotelian *logos* of *lexis* (Haliwell 1998: 344-349), their quest for a "literariness" in formulating a literary science. But this Formalist "literariness" (apropos the eidetic meaning) is not exactly a Platonic *eidos* that is reproduced severally by way of mirror-reflections. The "literariness" or the "literary essence" is compared to electricity which "if one screws in an electric bulb will light it". Thus there is no need of an *apriori* definition of essences. "It is important only to discern their manifestations and be aware of their connections." Thus the image of expression is not a *mimesis* of the *logos*, but its manifestation—expression and representation are thus distinguished in the Formalist vocabulary putting a question to Derrida's charge of logocentrism.

In 1929, a decade after, Jakobson left Moscow the socialist Russia, that inspired V.N. Volosinov for propounding a Marxist theory of language that rejected the idealist/ humanist model of expression founding it on the immediate social situation that makes it meaningful:

> The experiential, expressible element and its outward objectification are created, as we know, out of one and the same material. After all, there is no such thing as experience outside of embodiment in signs. Consequently, the very notion of a fundamental, qualitative difference between the inner and the outer element is invalid to begin with. Furthermore, the location of the organizing and formative center is not within (i.e., not in the material of inner signs) but outside. It is not experience that organizes expression, but the other way around—*expression organizes experience*. Expression is what first gives experience its form and specificity of direction.
> Indeed, from whichever aspect we consider it, expression-utterance is determined by the actual conditions of the given utterance—above all, by its *immediate social situation*. (Innis, 52)

Expression is not, thus, a monologue, a self-realized experience of the subject. It is a dialogue—a speaker—listener/addresser—addressee circuit. Volosinov's notion of expression as a vocal utterance, as a material phenomenon has been endorsed upon by both semioticians and semanticians. Semiotics considers utterance as a vocal signal, a member of the semiotic system in general, other members being icons and indexes. Whereas the philosophers name utterance an "act", the linguists (as semioticians) call it a signal—a sign. However, both con-

sider this utterance as a physical behaviour with its material existence external to the utterer. For the word "utterance" is named "expression" by the philosophers who classify this "act" as referring and predicative. An utterance is referring expression when it makes a statement about something; and it is predicative when a certain property is denoted by it, both the varieties functioning as communication, this communication depending further on the intention of the utterer to communicate to one or several receivers. Although all expressions are utterances, all utterances are not expressions in a restricted sense. The utterances that communicate factual information are "descriptive" and "The most appropriate term for what is common to the social and expressive functions of language (and of other human signaling systems) is interpersonal." (Lyons, 51) Lyons ignores Volosinov in counting the linguists who stress the social function of language such as Malinowski and Firth). "The so-called EMOTIVE or "expressive" function, writes Roman Jakobson, "focused speaker's attitude toward what he is speaking about. It tends to produce an impression of a certain emotion whether true or feigned..." (Innis, 151) But Charles Morris is unwilling to identify the expressive with the emotive since it engenders many confusions:

> One might say that every sign expresses its interpretant, without signifying it. Or one might say that a sign is expressive to the degree that its production is itself taken as a sign by an interpreter of some state of its producer. In this case not every sign is actually "expressive" though it is potentially so. Of course certain signs (such as cry of alarm) are much more frequently interpreted as expressive in this sense than are other signs, and these are the signs which some persons perhaps intend by their use of "expressive". But all signs may be interpreted as expressive in this second sense of the term, and what is expressed is by no means limited to emotions or attitudes. (Innis, 184)

VII

The post-structuralist thinkers attack Descartes and the whole of the rationalist tradition that follows him. A major blow comes from the psychoanalysts who demonstrate that all that is mental is not known or experienced by the subject, because there is a large area of the mind that is unknown or unconscious. Secondly, the "inner" subject is not at all independent of the world of senses that is constructed materially. But, ironically, Cartesian dualism of body and mind also presents a dual model of mind: a portion of which is known and the other unknown. Sigmund Freud, in analyzing the psyche (psycho-analysis) uses the word *das Unbewusste* for the unconscious that literally means *unknown*. And, obviously, this unknown is known through the known. Freud did not impose the

unconscious on the mind arbitrarily. It is the consciousness from which the unconscious is inferred. Although unpopular, unacceptable for the Victorian taste, Freud said, this unconscious is inherently sexual, and the areas of consciousness that signify unconscious are dreams, amnesia, linguistic features such as slips of tongue, puns, compulsion to repeat, denial, rhetorical forms of analogy, simile, metaphor, etymological play, anecdotes and literature as a whole. Freud then divides the unconscious into three types: descriptive, dynamic and systematic. The descriptive unconsciousness is that which is absent from consciousness, the area that covers memories, thoughts, wishes fears and dreams. The *dynamic* aspect of the unconscious is its kinetic function, the psychic energy active and busy in maintaining an equilibrium of tension and its release of which the subject is unaware. Freud uses the word *systematic* to explain the "tripartite" model of the mind—*id, ego* and *super-ego. Id* refers to the instinctual drives (*Triebe*) that spring from the constitutional needs of the body; *Ego*, developing out of *id* is an agency that opposes and regulates the drive; and *super-ego* is a representative of the parental and social influences upon the drives that transforms them internally.

For Freud, conscious is the experience at a given time that the mind is aware of, pre-conscious covers the elements of experience that can be called into consciousness at will whereas unconscious contains all that has been kept out of the pre-conscious and conscious states. Freud makes a very remarkable, although controversial, point that unconscious is inherently sexual, a point he demonstrates severally, and a point that provokes several critical methods in the contemporary speculations. The major instinct of man, says Freud, is libido or sexual desire and since culture and social system prescribe the fulfillment of this desire according to one's own will, this desire is repressed to the unconscious so that there is a permanent and inevitable barrier between consciousness and un-

$$\text{consciousness:} \quad \frac{\text{CS consciousness}}{\text{UCS unconscious}} \quad \text{(repression barrier).}$$

Meaningfully, Freud explores that the gender complex in human psychology is not merely a social phenomenon; it is also a biological factor that triggers the sense of the "other" in human experience as a whole. The famous "Oedipus complex" is nothing but an authentic example of the repressed sexual desire of a son for his mother, not the reverse. This complex is the nucleus of desire, repression and sexual identity. In case of a girl-child, the absence of a penis generates castration complex that causes her hostility to mother, and love for father. The central point in Freud's analysis of the human mind necessary for a philoso-

phy of mind is, however, that the mind is a physical phenomenon, not a transcendental spiritual entity: the mind comes into being out of the body.

The French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan reformulates these Freudian ideas of conscious and unconscious in terms of structuralist linguistics so as to arrive at a new concept of human subject as also a new concept of linguistic function. The unified, stable and humanist confidence of the Cartesian subject is significantly subverted by Jacques Lacan's reversal of Descartes's cogito: "I think where I am not, therefore I am where I do not think." (Sarup, 40) Lacan's radical role in dehumanizing the subject in decentering the human consciousness, and disconnecting the continuous presence of the rational self was highly influential among the Parisian intellectuals who attended his seminar lecturers at Ecole Normale during 1960s where psychoanalysis and Marxism were bridged by the efforts of Louis Althusser, Professor of Philosophy and member of the French communist party by whose invitation Lacan changed his venue of seminars on psychoanalysis from Saint Anne Hospital to the Ecole Normale. Lacan's audience among a thousand, included the luminaries like Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Claude Levi-Strauss, Julia Kristeva and Jacques Derrida. Lacan reread Freud without a unified self or ego, and Althusser reread Marx without any reference to the Hegelian absolute subject. Thus the common theme of intersubjectivity that emerged out of the Lacanian transformation of the Freudian psyche fit to the contemporary need for a political interpersonal relationship.

The ideological breach between existentialism and Marxism was also bridged up. Lacan's central efforts in depersonalizing the self and subversion of the subjectivity of the subject necessarily correlated psychoanalysis with linguistics: The conscious psyche does not think, it is thought; and the rational subject does not speak, it is spoken. The conscious is not independent of the unconscious, nor is the subject so of the object. Since it is the unconscious that always shapes the conscious, and it is the thought that shapes the thinker, it is the speech that shapes the speaking subject. It is impossible except any certainty for the "whole truth" that can never be spoken. The subject—transitory, evanescent, always elsewhere—emerges when it is inserted into the signifying system of the symbolic order as soon as it begins actively to speak. The subject is an effect of the signifiers that represent it, sliding from one to another along the signifying chain. (Ecrits: 153, 155)

Unlike the philosophers like Heidegger, who believe that the proper object of their study is Being, Lacan concerns himself with language and speech which, he thinks, are primordial in human experience. There is no pre-discursive Being. Reality is founded in and defined by discourse—a mode of human relatedness mediated by speech consequently, the human subject being a subject of speech

or linguistic construct. If the conscious existence is a linguistic construct, so also is the unconscious: "The unconscious is that part of the concrete discourse, in so far as it is trans-individual, that is not at the disposal of the subject in reestablishing the continuity of his conscious discourse". (Ecrits: 49) If men, women, children of the conscious existence are all signifiers, the repressed material of the unconscious existence such as memories and desires are also nonverbal signifiers linked together through the mechanisms such as *displacement* and *condensation* that correspond to their linguistic counterparts—metonymy and metaphor. The subject is therefore a fragmentary construct of the language of both the conscious and unconscious levels of its existence.

In constructing the linguistic structure of the conscious and the unconscious Lacan consults Freud, Saussure, Jakobson, Benveniste and Levi-Strauss. Freud supplies the mechanism of the unconscious, Saussure provides the conventional or arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified, Jakobson's metonymic and metaphorical aspects of language correspond to Freud's mechanism of unconscious, Emile Benveniste demonstrates that language is not an external phenomenon that the subject uses (like a customer's using a commodity), both being interdependent because the very structure of language depends on the application of the subject in it. Lacan also agrees with Levi-Strauss that language performs symbolic function along with its role of verbal communication. Nevertheless, Lacan reconstructs the views of Saussure and Levi-Strauss: In the semiotic world of Saussure the signifier-signified relationship achieves stability once the users of the particular language accept it traditionally. A signifier, however, is meaningful in so far as it is different from the other signifiers in that system of language. But Lacan reviewed that the Saussurean signifier-signified relationship cannot be stable, because they are not directly related. The signified is cut off from the signifier that dominates this relationship. What is, therefore, signified is another signifier, as, in a dictionary, the meaning of one word is another word. Signification is an unending process, a signifying chain- an "incessant sliding of the signifier under the signifier" (Ecrits: 154) ... "it is in the chain of the signifier that the meaning 'insists' but ... none of its elements 'consists' in the signification of which it is capable at the moment" (ibid., 153). "What this structure of the signifying chain discloses is the possibility I have ... to signify *something quite other* than what it says." (ibid., 155) No signifier, then, *consists* of any meaning (signified), unless, at a particular moment a meaning is *insisted* on it. Without violating the Saussurean conventionality of the linguistic system, Lacan insists on the flexibility of the signifying process that widens the richness and cultural value of language itself. His ideas imply that language and, for that matter, any signifying system including physical gesture is incapable of

expressing the subject wholly, because it is language that constructs the subject. In other words, language expresses the subject rather than vice versa; and again, in expressing the subject, language is necessarily intersubjective, because there is no subject, only intersubjectivity.

Lacan, again, correlates the Saussurean notion of difference as the criterion of the identity of a signifier with the function of a mirror image that he borrows from the French psychologist Henri Wallon. Before our entry to the realm of language that preexists our birth we experience the sense of difference from our mirror images during six to eighteen months after our birth. From its mirror image a child experiences its difference from the others—from the parents, particularly from the mother with whom it is always associated during the childhood. Both the presence and absence of its mother develops the early phase of its sense of identity as necessarily depending upon its sense of difference/ separation from the mother. The mirror image is initially a fragment vision of his body leading subsequently to the orthopedic totality. This stage of the experience of image also generates the faculty of imagination, the difference between reality and illusion, between the empirical truth and the fictional truth. One can make a difference between the Platonic treatment of a mirror image and that of Lacan as they treat the same phenomenon from two different perspectives—metaphysical and psychological respectively. The faculty of imagination, as Plato understands, leads us to absolute illusion—the world of phenomena, that is only an image/mimesis of the Idea. But for Lacan, the faculty of imagination, initially visual in experience might generate a misrecognition of the subject, (fragmentary notion) the higher recognition of its identity being constructed by the symbolic system of language to which the subject enters in the next (linguistic) phase. Nevertheless, this mirror phase is responsible for constructing a fictional world (different from the *Platonic* phenomenal) in language. What is significantly extrapolated from this view of Lacan, is an aesthetic view that man's recognition/construction of reality (its own identity though) in the visual arts is less authentic (or inauthentic) than this construction in the symbolic structure of language. Precisely, according to Lacan, verbal art is of a higher level (symbolic) of experience than that of the visual art. Further, Reality, the whole of the Truth is realized neither in the visual, nor in the verbal arts.

In formulating the notions of "empty" and "full" speech, Lacan manipulates a strand from Heidegger's distinction between *Rede* (speech, discourse) and *Gerede* (idle talk) respectively. *Rede*, for Heidegger, is *Saying* our ability to respond to the voice of Being by remaining silent, whereas *Gerede* is a degeneration of discourse in the speaker's response to the anonymous chatter of public opinion. Lacan's "empty" speech, on the other hand, refers to the speech of the

Imaginary that is bereaved of its symbolic status, where the subject is spoken by language, whereas the full speech is the language of intersubjectivity where the imaginary autonomy of the ego is lost in the symbolic vision of the subject as intersubjectivity. It is the language of metaphor, the language of poetry.

VIII

Lacan's subject as intersubjectivity, the construct of the linguistic process, constructed in the chain of signifiers is located in the process of social change by Louis Althusser. The Cartesian subject is an "empty subject". It is not consciousness that determines the existence of the subject, rather it is the (social) existence that determines the consciousness of the subject. Man is not the origin of society, it is rather the society that is the origin of man. "The continuity of ego", writes Bertolt Brecht "is a myth. A man is an atom that perpetually breaks up and forms anew" (1964: 15). The Lacanian subject as a linguistic construct is presented by Althusserian Marxism as a social construct. The human subject cannot remain outside the social structure. As a product of society, a subject acts to support or change that society. Linguistic signification is not an activity independent of the social process. In fact the process of signification as a whole, that of all values and meanings, is itself a social process, as the very structural elements of society and our cultural values reconstruct this social structure for both its identity and difference. In an extended sense, following the linguistic function as a function of signification in general, social practices are studied as languages: all kinds of social practices are meanings or significations. There are three practices that determine the social process, the production of the material conditions of human life. It is this production that distinguishes human beings from other animals, and production is defined as the transformation of specific raw materials into specific products by labour using specific tools. The modes of productions of the material means of subsistence that determine the form of particular society, as it has been noted through the course of history are three—primitive (slave-owning), feudal and capitalist. Within a mode of production Marxist thought counts three practices—economic, political and ideological, that construct the human subject as he attempts to construct the system.

Ideology becomes a key term in the post-Marxist thought as it specifies the way the human subject is constructed in the social process. The term does not simply refer to a system of ideas, or a false consciousness. It governs the way people act, it governs their feeling of themselves as individuals. Louis Althusser writes:

Practical ideologies are complex formations of montages of notions-representations—images on the one hand, and of montages of behaviours—conducts—attitudes—gestures on the other. The whole functions as the practical norms which govern the attitude and the taking-up of concrete position by men with respect to the real objects and the real problems of their social and individual existence, and of their history. (Coward and Elis, 67)

Althusser's realization of the idea, that ideology produces the subject as the place where a specific meaning is realized in signification, is a correlation of the traditional Marxism with Lacanian psychoanalysis, an idea that specifies the role of ideology in the post-structuralist era with great significance. Althusser also claims to have fulfilled a theoretical need of Antonio Gramchi for elaborating a new type of man suited to the new type of work and productive process in the capitalist society. Althusser discerns two types of institutions in the capitalist state—the 'Repressive State Apparatuses' (police, law courts and army) that functions by applying force or violence, and the 'Ideological State Apparatuses' (political parties, media, family, educational systems and religious beliefs and practices) that function by persuasion, by 'ideology'. By introducing the role of these apparatuses, Althusser argues that since the social practices are governed by these institutions which are material, and since ideas are always transmitted by these material institutions, ideas are themselves material. Therefore, ideas (as the idealist phenomenon of a spiritual/mental/subjective character) do not exist: "the existence of the ideas of his belief is material in that *his ideas are his material inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which derive the ideas of that subject.*" (Althusser 2001: 114) Althusser ultimately converts the subject into an object—the objectified subject celebrated by post- modernism. Ideology, Althusser asserts, preexists the individual whose subjectivity has always already been determined by a specific set of roles as prescribed by this ideology.

Althusser's ideological subject does not inherit any Lockean innate ideas, as the Behaviourist would agree, no instinct, no talent, no genetic characteristics excepting its pre-assigned place in the ideological structure of the family. A subject is a subject, not because of its independent psychic status, but because of *its subjugation* to or *being subjected* to the ideological structure of the society—the milieu of its existence: *"there are no subjects except by and for their subjection."* (123)

The theme of intersubjectivity that dominated the continental philosophy, and challenged the stability and determinacy of human subject in the tradition of liberal humanism underpinning the theoretical foundation of expression as the nature and process of art creation, also dominated the intellectual debate of the current poststructuralist era that intermingled the common issues in politics, linguistics, psychoanalysis, literary and cultural theories. The five major points that determine this intellectual debate might be counted: pervasiveness of politics, constitutive character of language, provisionality of truth, contingency of meaning and mythicality of human nature.

Some of these points have already been noted in the phenomenological meditations studied above. Other thinkers who matter most in shaping these points in the post-structuralist era are the French critics such as the anthropological philosopher Michel Foucault, and a couple of linguists like Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes who started their career as structuralists, but subsequently heralded the linguistics of post-structuralism. Roland Barthes correlates the humanist "subject" with the medieval *"auctor"*, the Latin word which carries with it the verbs *agere* (to act or perform), *auieo* (to tie), *augere* (to grow) and the Greek noun *autentim* (authority). All these senses of *auctor* are connoted by the modern English word "author" that is loaded with immense cultural value initially entailing not the verbal authority/inventor, but the reverse— adherence to the authority of cultural antecedent. Since the fifteenth century through the first half of the twentieth century "author" enjoyed mostly a stable status of cultural and social prestige, traveling through the feudal/agricultural and industrial phases of European social history. Earlier, in the fifteenth century, the discovery of the New World had already provided the Europeans with a capacity of being the "other" than what they thought of themselves. This "other" within them was the "genius" the Creator identified with the rationalist "autonomous (human) subject", finally merged with "author" in emerging into an integrated concept of the authoritarian "artist" who was not merely an Aristotelian agent of imitation, but the sole creator of an Original World. This "Romantic author" has been challenged by the New Critics and Marxist critics in their own ways where the validity of expression as externalization of the experience of an author as an autonomous subject has been questioned.

Barthes is aware of this genesis of author, "the voice of a single person", and denies him any authority of the verbal performance, because, he corroborates Heidegger that language is not any personal property of an author: "For him, for us too, it is language which speaks, not the author; to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality (not at all to be confused with the castrating objectivity of the realist novelist) to reach that point where only language acts, 'performs', and not 'me'." (1977: 143)

Barthes reduces the author to only a writer in its literal sense of a scriptor: "never more than the instance writing, just as I is noting other than the instance saying I: language knows a 'subject' not a 'person', and this subject, empty out-

side of the very enunciation, which defines it, suffices to make language 'hold together', suffices, that is to say, to exhaust it." (1977: 145) Author and text are not related in terms of creator-creation, subject-predicate, father-son. Author vanishes (the moment the text is written). The empty subject, therefore, has nothing to *express* (press out): "Did he wish to express *himself*, he ought at least to know that the inner 'thing' he thinks to 'translate' is itself only a ready-formed dictionary, its words only explainable through other words, and so on indefinitely... Succeeding the Author, the scriptor no longer bears within him passions, humours, feelings, impression, but rather this immense dictionary from which he draws a writing that can know no halt... infinitely deferred." (1977: 146-147) Though in a different way, Barthes agrees with the phenomenologists, that there is no final signified, meaning being indeterminate, indefinite and ambiguous. Expression of the humanist subject is abnegated in favour of the phenomenologist expression as an indefinite and ambiguous perceptual behaviour of the body—subject. That is otherwise the true character of linguistic signification.

Barthes reflects on expression in his essays on Brecht and theatrical costume. It seems, he considers expression as of a modernist origin—"'modernist' bourgeoisie of *L'Express*" that subjects Brechtian theatre to political denaturation. Brecht is opposed to the romantic (expression oriented) view of art that presupposes the contrast between heart and head, intuition and reflection, the ineffable and the rational—that ultimately masks a magical conception of art. Instead, Barthes's is a "formalist" orientation of dramatology. It is the Marxist ideology of Brecht that is responsible for considering human misfortunes historical rather than natural. Brecht is opposed to an aesthetics of the "natural" expression of reality, because, according to the Marxist ideology, as Brecht understands, man himself has ceased to be natural in his historical existence—in a still—alienated society. The bourgeois concept of art as expression of human "Nature" presupposes an essentialist illusion that man has an autonomous universal essence (a human subject) that he exteriorizes in art. But the Marxist alienated man determined by his historical context has no essence as such, and therefore, there is a distance between man and nature rejecting any natural relationship between human nature and art or between art and reality. In other words, since human beings have no essence called humanity, art has no reality to express. According to Barthes, in the Brechtian context, it is the semiological method that explains the nature of art: "art is not so much to express reality as to signify it. Hence there must be a certain distance between signified and signifier: revolutionary art must admit a certain arbitrary nature of signs, it must ac-

knowledge a certain 'formalism', in the sense that it must treat form according to an appropriate method which is the semiological method." (1972: 74-75)

Natural expression of reality, for Barthes, means (re)presentation of false Nature—a *pseudo-physis*. But, for Brecht, art is *anti-physis*: the relation between art and reality is not natural, but conventional or arbitrary—the relation between the signifier and the signified in Saussurean semiology. But, again, Barthes proposes another sense of expression, endorsing upon Brecht: "Every dramatic work can and must reduce itself to what Brecht calls its social *gestus*, the external, material expression of the social conflicts to which it bears witness. It is obviously to the director to discover and manifest this *gestus*." (1972: 41) Expression understood as manifestation has nothing to do with the inner self of the artist, because in the Marxist context, there is no innocent and essential human subject, this subject being always subjected to the socio-economic determinations. Expression might be accepted as an aesthetic concept, but never in terms of rational or humanist vocabulary.

In almost an Aristotelian sense Barthes is against the spectacularity of costume: "it must avoid substituting independent values for the signification of the staged action ... It is not the duty of costume to seduce the eye, but to convince it." (1972: 44) The costumer is not a painter. The sole function of costume is to serve as a sign to the action without claiming any independent status of itself. Therefore it should not tend to be veristic (overrealistic), aesthetic (picturesque/an art in itself) or illusory. On the other hand, the ideal function of costume is to serve as a communicative sign with its semantic value so that it helps the entire performance symbolize or conventionalize its meaning. In advocating a semiotic nature of art, Barthes thus prefers signification to expression for explaining the nature of art inasmuch as his idea of expression as manifestation of social conflict also appears to be a mode of conventional or arbitrary linguistic signification rather than any natural expression.

Jacques Derrida's critique of Husserl's notion of expression and its difference from indication concludes that "despite the initial distinction between an indicative sign and an expressive sign only an indication is truly a sign for Husserl." (1973: 42) Expression differs from indication in so far as an indication is an empirically perceived sign, so also a communicative expression used or experienced in soliloquy is non-existent empirically. Indication is an empirical mediation of expression. Therefore the words used in expression are not verbal signs used as utterance or script. They are only imaginary representations (*Vorgestellt/Phantasie*). According to Derrida, Husserl also falls a victim to the European metaphysics of presence. The logical purity of the Husserlian sign that can be repeated severally in different utterances is nothing other than the logos

of the traditional Greek thought, and therefore, Husserl's thought is undoubtedly logocentric that nullifies the distinction between expression and indication both being representational in character. By the same stroke Derrida also wipes out Saussure's type-token structure of the linguistic sign. But it is necessary to reconsider the logical validity of Husserl's quest for an eidetic signification, a "pure meaning" which may not *metaphysically* pre-exist, but is *logically* presupposed, a line of thought that is most essential for Husserl's mathematical structure of thinking. Derrida's reductionism is not applicable to mathematical axioms and linguistic presuppositions. Particularly, Saussure's *langue* as a socially shared system, a consensus of a community cannot be reduced to a metaphysical presence. As Jakobson corroborates, language is the social institution par excellence—a set of rules delegating for the members of a particular speech community. Even if one accepts Derrida's notion of the "instituted trace" as a substitute for the concept of the sign, damaged beyond repair by its millennia-long marriage to the Western metaphysics of presence, Jakobson would insist that the trace is *instituted* indeed, and the form of presence achieved by this act of instituting a trace is a social fact (not a metaphysical logos)—"a consensus among those whose vested power or interest enables them to promulgate one trace as opposed to another and those who recognize the others' efforts as an accomplished fact... physically enforced presence hardly qualifies as metaphysical." (Steiner, 207)

Michel Foucault takes up the issue of expression in his essay "What is an Author?" where he places Barthe's disappeared author in the text that the author has scribed. Foucault, as it is well known, is famous for his prodigality as a philosopher who has abandoned the French phenomenological method as well as the Marxist tradition that his teacher Althusser pursued. Instead, Foucault draws heavily on Friedrich Nietzsche. Among many other young philosophers of Ecole Normale, Foucault was inspired by Merleau-Ponty's call for studying linguistics, anthropology and psychoanalysis. The common post-structural theme of anti-Cartesian, anti-humanist consideration of human subject remains very much the subject of Foucault's writings. But his 'subject' is formulated in the Nietzschean network of power rather than that of Althusserian Marxist ideology. According to Foucault, power is not a possession of a group or individuals who exercise it from above, does not define or constitute the prestige of a personal. Its movement, instead, is reverse—it moves from below upward. Power is exercised through an impersonal administrative machinery operative in accordance with abstract rules. Foucault rejects the structuralist view that the human subject is governed by a set of linguistic relation although during the 1960s he focused on the constitution of the subject in discourse. Simultaneously he also rejects the

Marxist view that the set of relations that determine the human subject is that of material production. Instead, he argues for a power relation that emanates, contra Althusser, not from a sovereign or a state, is neither a property nor a commodity of an individual or a class/group. Power is a network that determines everything that constitutes social reality. Following Nietzsche Foucault inverts the relation between power and knowledge. In his view, knowledge does not illuminate us, does not reveal truth, nor does it provide us with power to do things. Rather knowledge itself is a power to define others. Instead of being a liberation, knowledge becomes a mode of surveillance, regulation and discipline. Contra Hegel and pro Nietzsche Foucault rejects the continuity of the past into present. History, in his view, recedes the present to the past until a *difference* is located, and proceeds forward again tracing the transformation and taking care to preserve the discontinuities as well as the connection.

In Foucault's understanding, power, knowledge and history determine the human subject. Power determines the psychic formation of the individual, and the existence of the individuals is an embodied nexus to be transformed by the deployment of external causal powers that always produce resistance. Power and resistance to power constitute the subject's social reality. But Foucault does not clarify the vital points regarding the reason and nature of this resistance, for example, he does not answer the question "why should one resist?", "is it for external reason (physical force) or for internal (Althusserian ideology)?" But Foucault is always evasive, because he is deliberately "anti-systematic"—he, in a way, not only avoids but also abhors systematicity as such.

But the way he questions, the way he analyses, the way he reflects history of ideas and the ideas in history require that he should avoid discursive enunciation. He writes:

> I am well aware that I have never written anything but fictions. I do not mean to say, however, that truth is therefore absent. It seems to me that the possibility exists for fiction to function in truth, for a fictional discourse to induce effects of truth. (Sarup, 1993: 84)

Foucault handles the issue of expression, inevitably, interfusing his notions of discourse, subject and author. As an anti-Cartesian, he opposes the human subject framed in the tradition of Romantic individualism, and therefore opposes the nineteenth-century image of pressing-out of the personal/ individual/ subjective/ unified and stable inner:

> The writing of our day has freed itself from the necessity of expression; it only refers to itself, yet it is not restricted to the confines of interiority. On the con-

trary, we recognize it in its exterior deployment. This reversal transforms writing into an interplay of signs, regulated less by the content it signifies than by the very nature of the signifier. (Adams and Searle, 1261)

Foucault thus rejects the Romantic expression in favour of a self-referential linguistic expression, in favour of a self-referential linguistic reality as well as the structuralist view of the stable or systematic signifier-signified relationship. Instead, he holds a dialectic interplay of this relationship which he calls "discourse" that transgresses its common area of linguistic vocabulary and extends over the whole of a cultural dominion. A discourse is not constructed in isolation, it is a dialogue, a relation within a social/institutional context in which it is produced. Foucault's discourse is not a rule-governed game (as it is in the analytic and structuralist traditions):

> Writing unfolds like a game that inevitably moves beyond its own rules and finally leaves them behind. Thus, the essential basis of this writing is not the exalted emotions related to the act of composition or the insertion of a subject into language. Rather, it is primarily concerned with creating an opening where the writing subject endlessly disappears. (*ibid.*)

But this disappearance of the writing subject or author is not an absolute absence, because Foucault holds, referring to the stay of Scheherazade in *The Arabian Nights*, spoken or written discourse tends to protect a writer or a speaker against death—excludes death from the circle of existence. The author disappears from the text to re-exist in it in a different mode, in a functional mode. Foucault discusses four characteristics of the "author-function" or this functional mode of the author's existence:

> The "author-function" is tied to the legal and, institutional systems that circumscribe, determine, and articulate the realm of discourses; it does not operate in a uniform manner in all discourses, at all times, and in any given culture; it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a text to its creator, but through a series of precise and complex procedures; it does not refer, purely and simply, to an actual individual insofar as it simultaneously gives rise to a variety of essays and to a series of subjective positions that individuals of any class may come to occupy. (Adams and Searle, 145)

In reinstating the author in a text as a function, rather than as an individual human subject, Foucault discards several critical traditions at once—the genetic or biographical criticism of the Romantic tradition, the closed texts of the New Critics, the stable text of structuralism, and the Derridean *ecriture*, which, like the theme of self-referential writing denotes writing as the interplay of presence and absence: "signs represent the present in the absence".

Finally, Foucault substitutes new questions:

"What are the modes of the existence of this discourse?"
"Where does it come from; how is it circulated; who controls it?"
"What placements are determined for possible subjects?"
"Who can fulfil these diverse functions of the subject for the old ones?
"Who is the real author?"
"Have we proof of his authenticity and originality?"
"What has he revealed of his most profound self in his language?"
and quotes Beckett,
"What matter who's speaking?" (*ibid.*: 1269)

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Expression as Impression:
The Metaphor of Artistic Expressiveness in our Thought on Aesthetic Surgery

Rob Van Gerwen

Introduction

In present-day medico-technological culture, theories of artistic expression have a far broader relevance than one might make out on account of the philosophical debates on art and on the mind. Both in the context of art and in the broader context of culture at large, an adequate account of artistic expressiveness should be center stage. Yet, the comparison between natural expression (in a person's face, etc.) and artistic expression may stand in our way, if it is done from an epistemological point of view that inquires after norms of correspondence between outer and inner. Anglosaxon philosophy appears to have, thus, depsychologized expression in either art or the human face, by approaching it almost exclusively epistemologically. In the present chapter, I give better weight to the interactive psychology of expression so as to enable us to critically assess our traffic with aesthetic surgery.

In cultural contexts, processes of social expressiveness abound. Like advertizing, and branding, aesthetic surgery means using expression to make an impression, treating outward appearances instrumentally, concentrating on short term successes at the cost of long term profundity. Aesthetic surgery makes explicit use of the metaphor of artistic expressiveness. What motivates this use shall be treated here as a desideratum for an account of artistic expressiveness, building on the idea that its instrumental application to natural expression is both legitimate and telling (about the value of art).

1. Natural Expression

1.1 As a Symptom

The epistemological nature of mainstream philosophical approaches of the expression of emotion is evident. Expression is reduced, here, to its relational properties. Questions are asked about the correctness of expression with regard to the emotions presented in it,[1] or of the emotions to either the world or the person's psychology.[2] When the question of empathy with other people's minds comes up, this, too, is treated epistemologically. The debate concentrates on the processes in the empathizing mind: whether the empathizer makes use of a theory of mind or, rather, simulates, off-line, the other's mental life.[3] Epistemological approaches assume an opposition between subject and object, which seems particularly unfit as a starting point for an account of our dealings with expression. The opposition evades the very moment of interaction between one person expressing and another empathizing with that. This moment of reciprocity has a logic and substance of its own. In fact, the very asking of epistemological questions seems unfit for this event. In a sense, expression is always true: it is 'as is'. If it is there it is neither true nor false to anything else, but is an event in itself.

One way to say this is by acknowledging that expression is not a means of referring to a hidden inner life, but is, instead, such a life's symptom. Saying "I have a pain in my knee" is quite different from yelling "ouch!" It seems to describe a state of affairs, a pain in my knee, whereas the yelling merely expresses it. Wittgenstein thinks that the distinction is mere appearance, a trick played on us by language.[4] Because "I have a pain in my knee" resembles syntactically "I have a book in my hand", we think that both equally describe, and refer to some objective state of affairs. Both utterances are, instead, merely expressions of the pain, the proposition slightly more sophisticated. Expression typically takes place in the vicinity of the feeling that is expressed, and the body that feels and does the expressing. I express my own pain, not yours, and I do it in real-time when the pain surfaces (and there is an audience for the expression), not a few days later. Hence the thesis that natural expression is a symptom of the mental

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[1] What is introspection, is it an intelligible position? Think of Descartes' 'myth of the given' (Sellars), Dennett's metaphor of the mind as a theatre. But see J.J. Gibson, and McDowell on the primacy of the organism's social position in perception.
[2] James on the visceral versus Solomon's cognitivism
[3] Emotion's embeddedness in the narrative of our lives. Goldie; but see Wollheim (1999) on the intra-psychological history of emotions.
[4] Cf. Carruthers and Smith (1996); Davies and Stone (1995a and b).

life that is expressed in it. Like the symptom of a disease is not itself the disease, so the expression is not identical to what it expresses. Yet, it is like saying too much, that both always come together, or stronger: that where the expression is, the expressed is, too.[5] There is a priority of the expressed over the expression, in that obviously, a person in a body deprived of expressive powers would still seem to be capable to experience thoughts and feelings like any other. Yet, it makes no sense to treat the expression as "not the real thing". Expression, in a sense to be elaborated, is more real than the expressed.[6]

To bring out the fact that expressiveness has a social substantiality vastly distinct from what epistemological accounts come up with, a holistic, aesthetic approach is wanted.

1.2 Making Faces in Front of the Mirror

It is evident that cosmetic reconstruction is a crucial help for fire victims and their kin. Reconstructive surgery is not restricted to the recovery of the subject's functional organs. As important is its effect of restoring the victim's powers of expression—as good as possible. Yet, even after reconstruction, a long struggle in front of the mirror ensues. The 'mirror' is meant literally here as well as metaphorically: someone with a restored face has to reappropriate his personality in virtue of other persons' responses.

Aesthetic surgery, in contrast, is the changing of face and/or body for the sake of societal successes at the possible cost of long-term social profundity. Aesthetic surgery treats the person as an artefact, applying, at will, the metaphor of artistic expressiveness to facial expression.[7] But what version of the metaphor is used? Is it more than the rather simplistic idea of the artist producing an expression through the manipulation of his materials? What about the long psychological struggle of the artist for his individual style?[8] Aesthetic surgery seems to simply assume that molding a face after some other face that is held beautiful (fashion, models, physiognomy) results in giving it the relevant expression (of success).

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[5] See Wittgenstein (1953), particularly #293.

[6] The case of a faked expressiveness is, of course, neutral to what theory one should pick, unless it is a theory that denies the possibility. Mine doesn't. As it is, my phenomenological, or aesthetic approach of expressiveness takes it as a substantial event that takes place between an expressor and an empathizer.

[7] Cf. Wittgenstein's (1953) private language argument.

[8] Cf. David Wiggins, 2001: 236-44.

Such thinking about human expression started off in 18th century with the theorizing of human physiognomy by Kaspar Lavater (1775), and with phrenology, the pseudo-scientific measuring of skulls. Both interpret outward appearance, especially the features of the face, as a means to discover a person's predominant temper and character.[9] This clearly presupposes an epistemological approach to outward appearance as a sign of the inner.

Now, the outward appearance we are born with, indeed, forms a crucial element in the development of our personalities, but only as it is mediated by other people's gaze, through social interaction. The failure of the physiognomic approach and of aesthetic surgery, lies in the negligence of what Lacan called the "mirror stage".[10]

According to Lacan, a one and a half years old child can discern its own image in the mirror. A child won't leave it at that recognition: it will begin gesturing, which teaches it that the image can be manipulated and that the mirror itself is empty. With this, the child develops an insight in the relation that holds between the mirror and itself, as well as those between its own reflected body and the other bodies it sees reflected there, but knows itself to be surrounded with, in reality. Lacan thinks that this reflective identification provides the mold for later, more social identifications. A mirror image suggests a curious stand-in of the self, which resembles other people by being out there. Yet, here is a person who doesn't prove to have a mind of his own by *responding* at will to the child's gestures. Instead, the image does exactly what the child wants it to do. Yet, the child does not experience himself 'out there', but 'here'. For the first time, it sees itself in the mirror as one of those people it knows already. This more or less forces the child to construe a conception of its own mind by way of an analogy.[11] In the mirror, the child sees how much it resembles 'other people', and it has an inkling of other people's having minds, as they do not always immediately respond to the child's needs. At times, the milk does not come instantly.

The biggest problem is the exact location of the mirrored mind. The child knows it has a mind—unreflected though this knowledge may be—but it has no reason to think that its mirror image has one as well. Surely, its own mind is 'here' and whatever it sees 'out there' resembles the other people it is already aware of. But they prove to have a mind by not acting simultaneous to the child.

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[9] See Wollheim (1993).

[10] See Böhme, 2001, 101-16.

[11] In his classical paper from 1949, "Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je telle qu'elle nous est révélée dans l'expérience psychanalytique." *Écrits*, 93-100. See also C.D. Broad (1925, 325).

The mirror image, in contrast, acts perfectly simultaneously. One should conclude that that image certainly does not have a mind 'of its own'. Wouldn't the child, rather than assume that the image has a mind, think that it has none, and that it merely is some extension of its own body, an extension with no further meaning? Yet, it seems to realize that what it sees in the mirror is how others see it.

Lacan also compares the mirror image with a person's 'imago' (as in status). Is what one sees in the mirror some sort of persona of oneself?[12] Lacan thinks it is: he thinks the mirror image is a Gestalt and to identify with it means asking for trouble, it induces one to head in a 'fictional direction'. I am not sure about this, though. There is a major difference between looking at one's mirror image and looking at some persona on the stage or in a film. With regard to what we see in the mirror we are supposed to respond in morally adequate manner. If we see someone heading towards our mirror image holding an axe, we are supposed to (and will) duck away, etc. The mirror image isn't as distant from us as Lacan thinks. Yet, we see ourselves there like others see us, as an outward appearance—one that provides a see-through to our moral inner, like it does with other people, even though in this case the mind is not there, in the image.[13] Somehow, the symptomatic relation of the expression is broken. This allows one to adjust his appearance to how one would want others to see one, etc. In the meantime, one must steer clear of narcissism, the personality disorder that combines a longing for admiration with a lack of empathy.[14] No one said it would be easy.

Both Plato and Kant thought, at one point, that someone's beauty is the outward expression of his moral nature.[15] It is an ambiguous position—not with Plato, perhaps, who seems to think that even Socrates (who seems to have been as ugly as a sater) was beautiful on account of his rational approach to life. Wouldn't we nowadays, rather, say that Socrates has an inner beauty not reflected in his outward ugliness, applying beauty to the inner in some derived manner. Kant seems to deem beautiful the very fact that a moral inner expresses itself in a person's outer appearance. Kant cheers beauty as a sign of communicability. "[...] taste is our ability to judge a priori the communicability of the feelings that (without mediation by a concept) are connected with a given presentation."[16] Indeed, we treat the outward appearance of an old man, or a sad woman—even when they are 'ugly' according to the latest fashion—as of a whole with their psychologies, their personal histories. In this line of thinking, there is nothing wrong with ugliness. It is typical, though, that ugliness has never been a real issue in aesthetics, unless as a deprivation of beauty.

This tradition in our thinking about beauty in people and in art seems naturally fit for aesthetic surgery. But let us look at mainstream thinking about artistic expression.

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[12] One reversed to the classical analogy-argument with which Mill (1867: 237-8) argued the existence of other minds: other people's bodies too are affected by events, and they too respond to these, so why not assume they undergo similar processes that we experience intermediately, and assume that they too have a mind? Mill started, naively, from our self-image, whereas Lacan argues that we construe our self-image after the images we have of others.

[13] The Latin word 'persona' refers to the mask of a stage actor, and to his character, to his role and to a role someone plays in his life (his position, or dignity); yet, it also refers to the person within, the personality, and his character traits. This ambiguity fits our thoughts perfectly well. The relation of person to persona is at stake also in art, and our philosophizing about art. Think of the question, Can white men play the blues (perhaps more clearly asked as Can The Beach Boys sing a gangstarap tune? Or: Can Busta Rhymes sing a Beach Boys tune?), or think of the film *Gummo*, where the actors seem to form part of the "white trash" they portray: they are both the represented persons *and* the personas that represent them.

[14] Cf. Wittgenstein, PI, #297: "Of course, if water boils in a pot, steam comes out of the pot and also pictured steam comes out of the picture's pot. But what if one insisted that there must also be something boiling in the picture of the pot? "

[15] DSM-IV #301.81.

[16] Cf. Alkibiades's praise on Socrates, in Plato's *Symposium*, and Kant, *CJ* section 17. See Van Gerwen "On Exemplary Art as the Symbon of Morality: Making Sense of Kant's Ideal of Bauty", *Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung. Akten des IX. Kant-Kongresses*. Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001. If it is the beauty (the outward expression) that precedes our recognition of a beautiful moral nature, does that mean that an evil character cannot be outwardly beautiful? This idea may be part of the explanation of why it is so hard to think of an evil movie such as Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* as beautiful. Maybe, with regard to *Triumph of the Will* there is an inconsistency we cannot accept, between some kind of beauty (and, by implication, inner moral goodness) and an overtly evil culture. We simply disagree with the idea that a culture like that can ever be beautiful. *Triumph of the Will* goes against our personal sense of self.

2. Artistic Expression

When looking at a picture of happy people dancing in the streets, we may yet find the picture expressive of desolation without contradicting ourselves. The meanings of the two terms (taken intensionally) may conflict, even while applying to the same extension: happiness may come qualified. In the present case, we find that the happiness in the dancing is contaminated, unpure—it has an expression of being desolated.

Applying 'conflicting' terms to the expression of a single scene shows how complicated the task of understanding an event's expression can be, but does it prove that the applications of expression terms to either the depicted or the picture, are different in kind? If we had a single term with which to describe the desolate depiction of happiness, we might want to use it.

According to Wollheim, ascribing expression implies the same psychological mechanism of projection. Wollheim approaches the issue with an eye on the beholder's acts, but he does not explicitly distinguish these two varieties.

2.1 The Opposition Account

According to what I take to be the best argument for opposing artistic expression to artistic representation, it is conceptually feasible to understand a painting which depicts happily dancing individuals as portraying the events in a desolate manner. Conceptually speaking, it seems all right to say that the mental or experiential dimensions of a painting's representation (its image, I mean) and its expression are of disagreeing nature, not only intensionally but even extensionally—if this distinction is available to one.[17] And this is so, supposedly, because expression is an aspect of the way the material of the work has been organized, whereas the subject represented in the image stands on its own—beyond the painted canvas, so to speak, in a distinct space—as do the experiences of its antagonists. Let us look at a classical example of the opposition argument. Nelson Goodman thinks that artistic expression is to be characterized as metaphorical exemplification; whether or not the metaphor in question is a psychological term is irrelevant, because expression is psychological by contingence only.[18] Good-

man sees exemplification as a reference relation opposed to that of representation and, therefore, expression too is opposed to representation. According to Goodman, if one says of a work which expresses x-ness that it is x, one is making a true assertion. The work really possesses, and exemplifies x-ness, albeit metaphorically.

Among other things, this means that the expression of a work is not in the artist's control as much as its representation is.[19] Such difference in control is, however, at best a gradual matter. The representational and expressive effects may very well be caused by a singular change in the material: a dot of red paint which both indicates a roof's colour and its gaiety. We must consider our responses to a represented face and its natural expression-as-represented to be based on how the painted marks are placed on the canvas, as much as are our responses to the (picture's) expression.[20] The effort of materially marking off the expression and the representation within some single picture seems wasted. To understand why the recognition of expression should be distinct from that of representation, we need an aesthetic account based in psychology, not in linguistic philosophy or ontology (*pace* Goodman). The most notable of Goodman's problems in the area of expression is his inability to explain why we tend to use psychological terms to describe what is expressed—a fact he acknowledges but dismisses as inessential. Expression terms supposedly apply metaphorically, and that is all there is to them. But, suppose we take a sad painting as a metaphorical exemplification—a metaphorical example—of sadness. How can this painting make us want to apply the terms 'is sad'? What metaphorical clues would be needed? I cannot think of any. What if we took the clues—if any were found—as literally applicable, and forgot all about metaphor? How could Goodman retort? He seems merely to repeat the mystery he set out to solve. In his account of expressive seeing, Wollheim refers to a psychological phenomenon we are already acquainted with in more ordinary circumstances. The projection which Wollheim thinks is involved in our recognition of expression both in nature and art stems from ways in which we have taught ourselves to handle our more negative emotions: "it reveals or intimates a history" of experience.[21] However, rather than explaining expression in terms of something absent (a psychological history), he insists on its perceptual nature. We perceive the expression of a work to pertain to the work, and to be part of it. The positive side to the 'opposition'

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[17] "On Exemplary Art as the Symbol of Morality. Making Sense of Kant's Ideal of Beauty." *Kant und die Berliner Aufklärung. Akten des IX. Kant Kongresses.* Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001b: Bd. 3, 553-62.

[18] Which it is not to Nelson Goodman, one major voice in defending the meant opposition.

[19] Cf. Goodman, *Languages of Art*, Chapters 1 and 2.

[20] This position is also defended in Jerry Levinson's "Musical Expressiveness".

[21] Wollheim, 1988, chap. I. "What the Artist Does." Cf. also Podro 1987, and 2001, Section II, for subtle criticisms.

argument is that it recognizes that artistic expression differs from the natural expression of real-life persons. However, it seems to construe this difference wrongly.

The entity that does the representing or expressing being prior to what it represents or expresses, it must, therefore, be approached primarily aesthetically. Wollheim realizes this, but he overpsychologizes the perceiver's response by tracing it back to his psychological history. For him, the psychological differences between a real-life perception and the perception of a work of art have no consequence for the account. The ad hoc interaction between the representation and its perceiver, though, in a sense comparable to that between two persons, is crucially different, and lies in the absence, or, respectively, presence of the mental life that is expressed. This distinction does not translate to that between a depicted expression (on a depicted face) and the expression of the picture. Due to this complication, artistic expression may need a different account (from that of opposing it to representation), such as the following, which takes it as the expression of an (implied) 'persona'.

2.2 The Persona Account

Bruce Vermazen (1986), and Jerrold Levinson (1996), among others, think that in understanding artistic expression we empathize with a persona in the work. The persona account allows one to group together the many expressive elements in a work using the model of the natural expression of real persons (the mental life inherent in personhood being part of what 'personas' have), while at the same time leaping out of the way of intentional fallacies by avoiding the identification of personas with real people, such as actors or authors.[22]

We obviously sometimes empathize with personas in a work (e.g. with the characters played by actors), but how? And how do we do it where no explicit psychological narrative is involved, as in music? There is no coherent whole of movements either bodily or mentally connected like we know of real persons: through bodily changes. What—apart from the intuitions concerning a suitable persona that the expression of the music induces us to develop—introduces the persona to which the expressive elements are supposed to belong? As though iron filings, merely on account of our taking them as ordered by some specific magnet, will provide the description of the magnet. Up to a certain point, this

may work if the filings are neatly laid out in a regular pattern, but if they aren't, why would one introduce a magnet as the ordering principle? Two answers are available. First, when introducing a persona (an implied magnet) we do not introduce full-fledged psychologies, let alone embodied ones, that wear their expressions as symptoms of their inner lives but merely parts of a psyche, i.e. those parts that correspond to what is expressed in the music. This answer takes us back full circle. The second answer is that introducing a persona is explanatory efficient. It structures the work in a meaningful way: elements will start falling into their right places. We need to find out what makes these 'places' seem the right ones.

Understanding problematic cases of artistic expression (such as musical expression) as a variety of character identification (in films, etc.) is a great step in what I think is the right direction, that of taking expression as a kind of representation of the mental. However, as long as we have an insufficient grasp of how we recognize the mental events of (fictional, represented) personas, we seem to have gained too little. Reversely, an adequate understanding of our understanding of characters' mental lives may give us the glue to stick the persona account onto the problematic cases. We should develop the analogy between natural and artistic expression by making a comparison between expression and representation, and finding an alternative to opposing the two. Personas do not have real minds, and here philosophy is in need of some ontology of represented personas.

2.2.1 Represented Personas

Are personas and their expression such that they can be represented? Gregory Currie argues in his *Image and Mind*[23] that they cannot. According to Currie, "A fiction does not have the kinds of properties—shape, size, colour—that could be represented pictorially."[24] Fictional entities do not exist, so they have no perceivable properties, and film viewers, therefore, cannot perceive them. Instead, film viewers perceive the actor and are requested to imagine the character. We merely think we perceive a fiction, whereas in fact, we do nothing of the kind.[25]

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[22] Wollheim, 1993: 149. According to Wollheim, our experience of an expressive thing or scene shows an affinity with previous similar experiences. Wollheim, 1988: 87 and Malcolm Budd, 2001, and, especially, Graham McFee, 2001: 155 ff.

[23] Cf. Levinson, 1996, for a survey of the arguments.
[24] Henceforth *IM*. In this book, Currie philosophizes about film against the backdrop of cognitive science.
[25] *IM*: 12. Currie's views form part of a long tradition of disqualifying secondary qualities in favour of what can be thought or imagined. See Gerwen, "Kant on what pleases Di-

The irrefutable, logical sound of this reasoning is precisely what forms its problem: Currie's thesis is mere logic; in fact, it is a fallacy, because it argues from exceptional cases where the reality of the represented appears to be decisive for a works' interpretation to the general conclusion that ontology decides in all cases.[26] My main argument with this ontological fallacy is based on the thesis that both the nature of the represented and, therefore, the establishment of its existence are contingent on the nature of its representation, and that any approach to representation, including epistemological or ontological ones, should start off with an aesthetic approach, which takes this contingency as its methodological starting point. Whence the contingency-thesis? First of all, representations on their own hardly ever reveal their truth or falsity—unless what they are showing is downright impossible. In general, one cannot decide just by looking at the representation whether or not the represented actually exists or existed. The assumption that with photographs we can (i.e. establish the truth of its subject matter) is based on a complex story about the technology responsible for the production of photographs. A story, which by the way is currently in the process of collapsing under the weight of digitalization. Secondly, in the event we fail to understand what is represented in a picture this depends, not on the vagueness of the object represented, but on the picture's properties, its lack of clarity. Lastly and crucially, no representation depicts everything that is co-extensive with the represented.

The issue may be more complex than it appears though, because in film we are confronted with an asymmetry that explains both Currie's thesis and the possibility of actors presenting fictional events. Whatever we see the body of an actor do, we are supposed to see his character do it. In contrast, whenever a character is supposed to be in some mental state, the actor merely has to reproduce the outward expression that goes with that. There is no need for him to actually be in a particular state, let alone in the one the character is going through, or one with the same intentional object. Yet, actors are type-cast, which assumes that their characters will be most lifelike if the expression they need on account of the story is provided for by an actor who, by nature, has that kind of expression. Indeed, Jack Nicholson acts most lifelike when the expression of his acting body is embedded in his own personal history.

As to the issue of how properties of the actor relate to properties of his character, an aesthetic analysis tells us that the intentional structure of film consists in a complex combination of scenario, directing, lighting, acting, shooting images with a camera, and cutting and pasting them afterwards. All these elements, working together in ever-different ways, provide the characters with their mental lives. Whose intentions are realized in a film? Unlike with literature, where this question is answered rather straightforwardly, due to the fact that each and every copy of a book is strictly identical qua wording with the original manuscript the writer delivered with his publisher; with layered works like those in music and film the relation between the conception and its ultimate realization isn't as neatly laid out. Moreover, film differs in this from music and theatre. It may be all right to view a piece of music as the composer's creation, or a play as the playwright's. The performers' intentions form a temporary intermediary for that creation, exchangeable up to a point—the score, or the text of the play decide what belongs to the work.

In cinema, however, the end product is a substantial, singular entity. It is not the scenario that decides the ontology of film, but the film itself. A film realizes the intentions of many and all are geared to one another. None of these intentions can be viewed as temporary or exchangeable. An actor's expressive powers are tuned to intentions in the scenario, to the director's directives, and to what the narrative apparently requires, to the sensitivity of the camera and to anticipations as to the length of the resultant shots and the place and timing they shall get in the resultant film. Scenario-writers count with the actors' expressive powers and director's views, etc. Films are 'congraphic'. They are not autographic like paintings, nor allographic like music or drama.[27] The movie watcher understands the mental life of some filmed human body in accordance with this congraphic intentional structure of the film.[28] Because of its congraphic nature, a film is more than what literally meets the senses, which, due to his ontological fallacy, Currie reduces film to.

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rectly in the Senses", *Issues in Contemporary Culture and Aesthetics*, 9, 1999: 71-83. See also Wittgenstein's remark on over-asking pictures, in note 14.

[26] Comparably, Podro in Gerwen (ed.), 2001 thinks that we use what is seen in a painting to imagine something about the represented.

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[27] There is a similar fallacy in Goodman's account of (fictional) representation (LA, Ch. I). Goodman dismisses fictional representation as a type of representation on account of the fact that the depicted does not exist and, therefore, cannot be referred to, let alone denoted—a core characteristic of representation according to Goodman's conventionalism.

[28] This terminology is, of course, Goodman's.

2.2.2 The Representation of Inner Life

Currie may want to dismiss my argument with his ontological fallacy: 'fictional characters do not exist, so how could we perceive them? 'The time has come to seriously wonder if we ever see the actor on the screen. To perceive a person in real life exceeds perceiving a bundle of phenomenal qualities: persons are creatures with a mental life filled with memories, expectations, emotions and moral considerations. This mental life shows forth in a person's facial and gestural expression. Understanding a mental life—whether one's own or someone else's—depends on social and linguistic contexts. The perception of a feeling is Ôunder a description' too. Even mental elements an agent is phenomenally privileged to are ordered by the language he needs to understand them—the very same language he uses to understand some other person's feelings. Now, someone showing his own inner life is not thereby representing it. Rather, such expressing is a symptom or extension of the inner life. By definition, the expression is in the same space and time that the mental it expresses is in. If the expressing body is perceived here and now, then in the same move its inner life will be perceived.

Hence the atypical status of represented expression—pictures of faces—and the asymmetry. One, who sees a represented expressive face, sees the expression of an absent mental life. I submit that it is the representation that provides it with this mental life. Thus, we may have seen Jack Nicholson on many occasions in cinema, but always as play-acting; that is, we are used to seeing him showing expressive symptoms of mental lives of ever different characters. What we see that represented body (which happens to be Nicholson's) express is a function of ever-differing narratives and intimations. As the person Nicholson is, we never get to see him. I am assuming, of course, that the actor is any good. If he isn't he—in cooperation with the rest of the film crew—won't even bring to life the minds of his character. Without a doubt, Nicholson qualifies. This cautionary remark is informing, because it is the bad actor whom we see as the person he is, with his personal mental life; the trouble he has playing his role. Compare this with the awkward feeling one may get from seeing a 50's Hollywood actor ride a car which is clearly being rocked in the studio—in such cases we cannot succeed in seeing the fictional, but are forced to imagine it instead. It seems wrong to think of this type pe of situation as exemplary of fiction film. Obviously, for Currie, such unsuccessful representation may be of little help. A bad actor, for instance, won't induce us to imagine a character. Thus, what we see represented on film is humane bodies endowed with mental lives provided by the representation. That is ontology too—ontology after aesthetics.

Expression is a disposition in the work to make a suitably equipped beholder procure an empathetic response. It is an effect of something which shares the phenomenological characteristics of representation. If the audience is to think that a character is in grief, here is no need for the actor to feel bad. All he has to do is perform the external expressions he and the audience think accompany grief. He must present the expressive clues, not the mental life itself.[29] Such represented natural expression (the clues of the mental performed by the actor) provides a better model for artistic expression than real-life natural expression.

3. The Phenomenology of Representation

The perception of everyday life events, and of the thing hanging on the museum's wall (the canvas), is relative to the position of one's body; it is, therefore, egocentric. However, the perception of a painting as an object of interpretation is not: art appreciation is non-egocentric. The term is Currie's.[30] Although we can perceive non-egocentrically anything whatsoever, such as a chair's form, in the case of representations we are intentionally induced to do so and to anticipate that certain of the properties perceived will recur in the represented space and time, in an elsewhere.

In Western societies, art is held autonomous, i.e. we deem it an intrinsic value that there be such a practice (Art) where people can entertain thoughts and feelings with regard to issues deemed important, without immediately being affected by these thoughts and feelings in more usual agent-related ways. All works of art, qua art, partake in this autonomy. What turns the moral evaluation of art into such a confusing issue is that works which confront their audiences with escapes from moral taboos do this against the very background of this practice's moral autonomy. The way to grasp this is by way of the notion of the artistic attitude. I give an imaginary example. If one were to enjoy *aesthetically* the throbbing pulse, the syrupy substance and the deep colours of the blood gushing from the wounds of the victim of a traffic accident, appreciating how the blood mingles with the photograph of an Indonesian fire's victims in the newspaper

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[29] Identifying the actor with his character (as in type-casting and in Strassberg's "Method Acting") is merely one approach. Directors such as Robert Bresson delegate the structuring of the characters' mental lives to the editing of sets of images that are as emptied of actorial meaning as possible.

[30] What the actor can be *seen* to be doing is identical to what the character is *supposed* to be doing. We will not imagine the character to be bending in a different direction, or to be wearing a jacket that is different from the one the actor is wearing.

article on his lap, one's attitude is certainly unfit, and morally wrong. But why is it? It can hardly be the problem that one does not treat the victim as a real man, because actors and performers are real people too and we are supposed to see them too as parts of works, not as real persons. One is merely doing the kind of things one is supposed to do when appreciating works of art. And one is actively engaged: both spiritually—by introducing all sorts of relevant associations—and physically—by walking around the wreckage, gazing through the shattered windows, reading the texts in the newspaper, concentrating on all the details: the sounds, the smells, the images, temperatures, etc. Only one thing one fails to do: one does not respond in a morally adequate manner to what shows itself. For clearly, one should try to rescue the man from his awkward position, should try to stop his bleeding, should provide first aid, or, at the least, should call for an ambulance. One might want to argue that the failure in this aesthetic treatment of the victim was more complicated psychologically and involved a reduction of the man's personhood. Yet one merely treated the person as a persona. With works of art it is the norm to refrain from moral actions in this sense, and this, I suppose, is what it means to take up an artistic attitude. Another objection might go like this: certainly, we might try to help the victim and *yet* notice the beauty of the thick blood, i.e. without thereby leaving our moral stance. I would agree, but fail to see this as an objection to the thesis that taking up an artistic attitude (such as we do when we approach something as a work of art) does involve, among other things, an abstraction from one's moral stance. I agree with the gist of the objection, though, that aesthetic appreciation is integral to our everyday— moral—perception of the world. The point is that it is always significant to refrain from relevant moral response on account of one's taking on an aesthetic attitude, but in art, this is the required format.[31] The exemplary moral situation—man confronts a traffic accident—is a perceptual situation. The agent-perceiver and his object are in one and the same space and time sharing a considered vulnerability. Whatever enters his senses reaches his mind synchronically. Within the exemplary moral situation all data provided by all of one's working senses belong to the one spatio-temporal continuum one is in. Also, persons encountered in such situations will have rich and complex psychologies with large temporal dimensions (memories of their past, projects for their futures),

which are expressed in their faces and attitudes, as a slice of their lives, etc. (Unless they recently underwent aesthetic surgery.) When, however, one appreciates a representation of whatever kind, this allows the space and time represented to be different from the space and time of the perception of the representation. And for the beholder of such representations, the represented persons (real or fictional) will have only so much mental life as is allotted to them by the representation. The notion of an artistic attitude explains the a priori nature of art's autonomy by showing the difference between realities perceived directly and realities perceived through representations. It also explains how the short-circuiting of direct moral agency is of the essence of representation, as it is, I submit, of all sorts of artistic expression.[32]

4. Making an Impression on You

The non-egocentricity of represented events provides the clue to the distinction between what a depicted event looks like and the picture's expression. In everyday perception, variations between the looks of a person and the meaning of his expression can only on account of aesthetic surgery be as contingently connected as they can be in a representation. 'Egocentricity' explains this: a real person's looks—and the see-through they provide if they are not rebuilt—as well as the mental life it symptomizes, are equally present to the perceiver, and his responses may induce the expressor to adjust his expression. The expression, and its perception through empathy, are second-personal reciprocal. There is, however, no such reciprocity with regard to representations. For an adequate understanding of artistic expression, therefore, the logical thing to do is to compare it to the non-egocentric phenomenology of representation, rather than to egocentric real-life expression—with which artistic expression only shares name and subject matter—the experiential—but not the bodily and spatio-temporal characteristics.

I have once viewed artistic expression as a kind of representation: of experiential events.[33] But I have come to believe, since then, that expression does play a

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[31] *IM* 73. Currie takes the egocentricity of mirrors as an argument for their (genuine) transparency, as opposed to the non-transparency of photos. He is arguing here against Scruton's, "Photography and Representation". We have seen above how there is a difference between mirrors and windows re the presence of the minds in the bodies one perceives.

[32] An account of natural beauty might run much like Marcia Eaton proposed in recent writings, viewing aesthetic appreciation as aiming at properties deemed valuable in one's culture. This should be so because all events and things and persons have, or show forth, aesthetically valuable aspects, and to perceive in whatever way such events, things and persons includes taking in their aesthetic properties as well.

[33] Derek Matravers in Hjort and Laver (eds.), 1997 argues that our normal emotional and moral responses to pictures are not at variance with day-to-day normal responses because

peculiar role within the phenomenology typical of representation. The symptomatic nature of natural expression and its second-person reciprocity point in that direction. Art requires us to take on an artistic attitude for a reason: to enable us to think and feel morally relevant thoughts and feelings toward situations that we don't have to respond to with actions—off-line so to speak.[34] These thoughts and feelings, though, are not to remain constricted to distant rational considerations—we are committed to the process of considering these thoughts and feelings, and this commitment, I now believe, is produced by a work's expressivity, its social efficacy. Artistic expressiveness, like its everyday social counterpart, implicates us in the world we are confronted with.

For this, neither of our five senses is available because they would either be the one(s) responsible for the type of representation that the expression is emerges from (e.g. vision with painting) on account of which they cannot explain the need for a distinct notion for the conveyal of psychological aspects in the meaning of a work of art (Goodman might favour this outcome); or, alternatively, they would be different senses which would call for new phenomenological specifications regulating the import of these senses, which specifications are not forthcoming. The perceptual mode responsible for our recognition of expression (empathy) I take to be an act of imagination, and a mode of sensitivity as essential to our appreciation of works of art as it is to our social interactions with people.[35] In case of artistic expressiveness, it is activated non-egocentrically.

The fact that in appreciating art our empathy is disconnected from our actions—we do not storm the stage to rescue the menaced heroin—does not go against the thesis that it takes empathy to understand a work's expression. Nothing is wrong with the empathy, but something is with other parts of our embodied perceptual apparatus. Because of non-egocentricity, in contradistinction with real-life empathy and the actions that surround it, our actions toward art works can achieve nothing in the range of preventing, enhancing, or changing the represented experiences empathized with. In artistic empathy, there can be no such thing because the mental life in question is in a different context from that of the beholder: it shares the phenomenology of representation. My approach enables us to see how in the case of pictures the basis of the difference between representation and expression lies in their respective modes of interac-

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the depicted is fictional (not even when this is the case), but because it is not here and now but depicted.

[34] In Gerwen (ed.), 2001: 144.

[35] Currie uses this term as an explication of empathy as simulation, but empathy with a person is not at all off-line with regard to moral answerability, as artistic empathy is.

tion with the beholder, next to the cognitive modalities necessary for their perception. The representation in a picture is its visually accessible aspect—that which conveys the visual aspect of the represented in a third person mode of address. It is perceived by the sense of vision. A picture's expression is the aspect which conveys a mental dimension through a second-person mode of addressing. It is perceived by the imagination—the power that has us perceive elements of reality which do not directly present themselves to our senses. Also, the account I am proposing helps us to understand why, in practice, we cannot locate the conflict involved in a desolate portrayal of a group of happy people. The desolation in the artistic expression pertains to the beholder's commitment whereas the happiness the represented character is depicted with is, as a set of visual clues, accessible to a third-person recognitional attitude. Both expressive elements are perceived-cum-constituted by our imagination, which should explain why they mix. Perception is informed by the co-operation of the various senses and the imagination. Imagination can be functionally distinguished from the operations of (and data provided by) the senses, but nevertheless functions integrally to perception. This should not remain inconsequential. Whereas it is perfectly intelligible, as Wittgenstein remarked, to think of reports about our own mental life as sophisticated expressions rather than as representations, in the case of worlds perceived non-egocentrically this distinction simply makes no sense. Here expression should be taken as answering a vastly distinct phenomenology: the non-egocentric phenomenology of representation.

An Objection and a Corollary

With artistic empathy, the imagination is caused to actively constitute what is not present before the senses. Imagination supposedly responds as it would if the mental life expressed by the work had a life to live in the world of the work. Such an empathic response, loosened from any agency, is achieved by a re-enactment by the beholder's imagination effected by whatever guidance issues from what is sensuously present in the work (and from what isn't, yet is expected). These empathized states or events are, therefore, as such not in any particular mind, nor do they belong to anyone in particular. Instead, the beholder merely does what he is supposed to do, much like the slavering of Pavlov's dogs upon hearing the bells (without the food). This answers an objection denying the intelligibility of my account: how can an experience that is caused by a work of art to appear in a beholder, at the same time be represented in the work? This question exclusively addresses the concept of artistic empathy, or

experiential representation, as though depiction were immune to it. It isn't.[36] Perceiving a picture differs as much from everyday vision as artistic empathy differs from everyday empathy. When we understand that a picture depicts a house, we do not see a real house, even though somehow we succeed 'naturally' to make the coloured spots on the flat surface before us into the three-dimensional object that is represented. In the cases of representations, the phenomenalities of perception and empathy are different, but their phenomenology of being addressed non-egocentrically is not. Natural empathy is a common aspect of perception, so there is every reason to suppose that the ability of non-egocentric address should function equally well in the case of artistic empathy as it does in the case of artistic vision. The intelligibility objection, when applied to depiction, goes like this: how can a house that is caused by a picture to appear phenomenally in us, at the same time be represented in the work? A weird question. Isn't this what representation is all about? According to Wollheim, expressive properties, like colours, are identified "through experiences that are both caused by those properties and of them".[37] This comparison supports my argument that both the pictorial and the expressive are elements out there. However, there is a difference in indexicality between secondary qualities and expressive properties which calls for an approach like the one proposed here. This difference can be brought out by looking at the use of samples. Samples can be used as a proof of the existence of some specific colour. Colour samples derive their functionality from being available to a third-person perspective. (This is neutral to the problem of the *phenomenality* of secondary qualities.) The mental, on the contrary, expression's subject matter, is first-person privileged, such that if a sample of someone else's mental life were at hand instead of merely the word naming it, and if we might use it to establish whether the mental events exemplified really are there in some or other person, this sample would have to be (able to be) mine alone. The property that causes us to perceive an expressive property is not accessible in the same manner the pictorial is, it is a tertiary quality.[38]

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[36] I am not committed to a view of imagination which equates it to fantasy. I view fantasy as a subfunction of the genus imagination, and imagination as a faculty operative within perception, next to, and supplementing the senses. I assume a Kantian notion of imagination as the mental power that brings before the mind things that are absent to the senses. Unlike fantasy, imagination is a power of perception in its own right. It—imagination— is not instrumental, is not obedient to the will, whereas fantasy is.

[37] Cf. Graham McFee in Gerwen (ed.), 2001: 163, n.5.

[38] Wollheim, 1993: 149.

None of the senses would suffice to perceive the sample, and as a consequence, some distinct modality would be required, empathetic imagination.

5. Finally

With art, taking on an artistic attitude is required (i.e. necessary): without it one does not perceive a thing or event *as art*. With non-art, taking on the artistic attitude is often tolerated (it is called 'enjoying the beauty of things),[39] but sometimes it is forbidden (enjoying the beauty of a car crash, or of someone kicking other person, etc.). With regard to one's own self, one's reflection in the mirror, taking up an artistic attitude may appear to be unproblematic, yet it is somehow impossible, as with regard to one's own person it is morally incoherent to lay off one's ethical attitude.

Artistic expression is fully malleable; we say that it *has* 'psychological *reality*', and that it assumes the artistic attitude, the non-egocentric phenomenology of representation which acknowledges the *absence* of mind in the material. Personal expression *is* both psychologically and bodily *real*: it is a symptom, sustained by facial characteristics, such as its muscle structure, and, therefore, is not malleable as such, i.e. if one changes one's outlook, one risks destroying other people's empathetic entry to one's moral inner, and as a consequence, one jeopardizes one's own personhood. Personal empathy assumes expression as a symptom; it is best viewed as social expressiveness. It is a tertiary quality—no epistemological questions are to be asked. But personal expression should be accounted for from two perspectives: that of the self who does the personal expressing and that of the others who do the personal empathizing—of the self looking in the mirror.

Can we conceive of our own bodies as material that we are able at will to endow with an expression? The analogy between natural expression and artistic expression is instructive. With artistic expression, there is only the side of the object that does the expressing, there is no internal perspective onto the expressed. With natural expression there is that internal perspective, as well. Any non-egocentric attitude toward the expression in a face, even if it is rebuilt according to external aesthetic standards, is morally incoherent. Thus, remodelling a face after a fashionable standard perverts one's means of expression, or of one's social expressiveness. We cannot simply apply the symptoms hoping that the mental life will come along with it. What is worst, aesthetic surgery is not merely a problem for the individual and his rights to make decisions about his own out-

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[39] Cf. Scruton 1983, Zemach 1993, Gerwen 1996.

look. It spreads through a culture like a virus, a narcissist virus that requires everyone to take up an artistic attitude towards persons. There is no stopping this virus. More and more we shall find ourselves looking at the other as a persona: ready for interpretation and for an assessment of the outlook's style.[40]

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Art, Expression, Perception and Intentionality

Dale Jacquette

1. Aesthetic Object and Subject

It is a frequent topic of philosophical discussion whether beauty is objective or purely subjective. There are dilemmas in aesthetics that duplicate the arguments on both sides of this perennial dispute in other areas of philosophy, in theory of knowledge and metaphysics and in ethics as another branch of value theory.[1]

The ideological and methodological oppositions that divide philosophy generally into realisms and idealisms, objectivism and subjectivism, also pervade aesthetic theory. We can ask whether there was beauty in the world prior to the emergence of intelligent perceivers like ourselves, or whether beauty itself comes into existence only through the perceptual idiosyncracies with which we happen to encounter the objects we happen to consider beautiful. It is a commonplace bordering on cliché that beauty is in the eye of the beholder—and not just of any beholder, but of beings who are not only capable of perception, but of appreciation, value judgments, as well as interpretation, understanding, and a wide range of sophisticated emotional responses. The experience of beauty and its opposites under this description can easily seem to be an altogether subjective phenomenon, available at most only to a select subset of psychological subjects, for whom it resides ontically speaking exclusively in their thoughts. Or so subjectivists in philosophical aesthetics are wont to maintain. Objectivists at the other extreme in the ideological spectrum insist on the contrary that beauty exists already in nature independently of thought, waiting, so to speak, to be perceived if only an

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[40] See Eaton (2001)

[1] An extensive literature exists on this subject, primarily from the standpoint of objectivists criticizing subjectivists. Important discussions appear in I.C. Jarvie, "The Objectivity of Criticism of the Arts," *Ratio*, 9, 1967, 67-83. Donald W. Crawford, "Causes, Reasons, and Aesthetic Objectivity," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 8, 1971, 266-274.

observer of the appropriate kind should happen to arrive on the scene. The subjective side of aesthetics from such a perspective is only half of the story, incomplete in and of itself, in which the mind takes notice of a preexistent beauty that is not constituted or conditioned by the circumstances of the receptive perceiver.[2]

The dispute about the ontology of beauty is an inexhaustible source of opposing philosophically fruitful arguments. What should not be in doubt is the manifest dependence of the existence of art on intelligent thinkers as makers of art. Art, beautiful or not, does not exist in nature, unless we suppose that the universe is the handiwork of a divine designer with a flair for the artistic. An artwork is something artificial and artifactual, as the etymology of these related terminologies unmistakably implies. Even if aesthetic objectivists are right to hold that beauty obtains independently of thinking subjects objectively in the world, works of art are quite another thing. Although the point is obvious enough upon reflection, it bears frequent repeating that without intelligent artists exercising judgment, taste, and skill, there can be no such thing as art. Nor, from an empirical standpoint, as a matter of philosophical anthropology, can we attribute art as opposed to other kinds of artifacts, however this preanalytically understood distinction is finally clarified, to any humanlike animals we know of other than our own very recent evolved species, *homo sapiens sapiens*.[3]

Ludwig Wittgenstein, in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* 2.1, says something both valuable and profound for these purposes about the nature of humankind when with remarkable insight and typical aplomb he flatly declares: "We make to ourselves pictures of facts." (Wittgenstein, 1922)

We do indeed make to ourselves pictures of facts, and we have done so, as far as archaeology testifies, throughout our history. Modern human beings, dating from the time of the evolution of Cro-Magnon man, have engaged in the production, use, and enjoyment of art ever since their emergence and dissemination between the last two great ice ages. The historical record supports the an-

thropological claim that without art, whatever else we are, we are not modern humans. If we go back only as far as the Neandertals, with whom our ancestors coexisted for at least ten thousand years, we recognize a hominid species that was remarkably intelligent, social, and well adapted to its environment, whose members made tools, buried their dead ceremonially, made boats and navigated inland waters, as has recently been discovered, and were probably capable of some kind of speech, although, perhaps, it is believed, with only two of the six vowel sounds which we modern humans command.[4]

Whether Neandertals are our progenitors or merely an evolutionary sidebranch of the hominid line, they were extraordinarily successful and exhibited many of the traits we associate with our own species. Whatever Neandertal humans accomplished, however, they did not, to the best of our historical knowledge, decorate their tools or dwellings, or make painted or carved images, icons, or representations of things in their world, nor, as Wittgenstein puts it, did they try to make to themselves pictures of facts. The very moment modern human beings appeared, somewhere between 35,000 and 50,000 years ago, there, anthropologists tell us, we immediately find an abundance of art, decoration, images, totems, likenesses of animals and human beings, and in general pictures of facts. Unlike Neandertals, these people, our closest ancestors, genetically indistuishable from ourselves, could not make a stone hammer or bone scraper or flint knife without carving images on the handle; they could not long make use of a cave without painting the walls with bisons and mammoths and their own handprints and even more metaphorical or ceremonial mythological images. We marvel even today at the artistic quality of what our ice age progenitors accomplished whenever a new wall cavern site or anthropomorphic antler tool is unearthed.[5]

Among other conclusions to be drawn from the data of a scientific anthropology, accordingly, we may argue that Martin Heidegger in his influential study of existential phenomenological ontology, *Being and Time*, has gotten things

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[2] See, for example, Michael Scriven, "The Objectivity of Aesthetic Evaluation," *The Monist*, 50, 1966, 159-187. Frank N. Sibley, "Objectivity and Aesthetics," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplement*, 42, 1968, 31-54. A.G. Pleydell-Pearce, "Objectivity and Value in Judgments of Aesthetics," *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 10, 1970, 25-38. Michael A. Slote, "Rationality of Aesthetic Judgements," *The Journal of Philosophy*, 68, 1971, 821-839.

[3] One of the best recent sources is Erik Trinkhaus and Pat Shipman, *The Neandertals: Of Skeletons, Scientists, and Scandal* (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1994), especially chapters 1 and 10 (8-45; 384-410), and Epilogue (411-419).

[4] A scientifically accurate portrayal of interaction between Neandertals and modern Cro-Magnon humans in the ice age is given in Björn Kurtén, *Dance of the Tiger: A Novel of the Ice Age*, with an Introduction by Stephen Jay Gould (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). On the limited vocal abilities of Neandertals, see Phillip Lieberman, *The Biology and Evolution of Language* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984). Gould in his Introduction to Kurtép. xvi, indicates that he does not accept Lieberman's hypothesis.

[5] An excellent account of ice age artworks and the thought processes of Cro-Magnon humans that they reflect is found in David Lewis-Williams.

seriously wrong.[6] *Da-sein* or human being-in-the-world is not a matter of technology, of *Zuhandenheit*, or grasping of things, taking them to hand; not, at least if we mean modern human beings, our own species, Cro-Magnon men and women like ourselves, rather than hominids generally. For even Neandertals had a crude technology and grasped things and put them to use, and therefore must have taken care for themselves and things, and seen the world as a repository of raw materials for their use. What distinguishes modern human beings, as contemporary archaeology and anthropology indicates, is not technology, but art. We are not merely man the knower or man the tool-maker, but man the artist. Wittgenstein has it right where Heidegger goes astray (unless Heidegger is talking about hominids generally), we are not just grabby tool users but picture makers—we who Wittgenstein says make to ourselves pictures of facts.[7]

If so, then philosophy ineluctably confronts the question of precisely how art is related to art-makers. What is required of a person in order to become an artist, or, better, to exercise the innate artistic potential that is our genetic birthright? The answer presumably must involve something that is immediately before us, something that we need only pay proper attention to in order to recognize it as the key to the problem of the philosophy of art. It must be there for us to see, given what we have already said, if it is true that compulsively and by nature we are all artists, to a greater or lesser degree, actively and competently or potentially and less competently, professionally or unprofessionally. Who, after all, has not at least as a child made pictures, who does take pride in making photographs, entertain oneself with singing or whistling, arranging flowers or furniture in a room in a pleasing way, decorating an object with respect to form and color according to a personally satisfying aesthetic? If we are all artists in one way or another, then we should be able to determine on reflection what is needed for art and what is needed in order to become an artist; for in that case it is something that we in a sense cannot prevent ourselves from doing if we only follow what is deeply ingrained in our species heritage.

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[6] Martin Heidegger (Trans. 1996) especially 132-137, 141-186 on disclosedness (*Erschlossenheit*), and 121-127, 171-230, and *passim* on care (*Sorge*).
[7] An insightful discussion of Heidegger's ontology in relation to Schopenhauer's theory of art is offered by Julian Young, "Schopenhauer, Heidegger, Art, and the Will," in Jacquette (ed.) 1996, 162-180.

2. Art and Language as the Expression of Ideas

When we consider the unprofessional art that most people make at some point or other during their lives, what do we learn? When we think of arts and crafts historically as they must have developed from an anthropological point of view, beginning with what seems to be an innate drive in human beings to make art and to make to ourselves pictures of facts, or other kinds of pictures or melodies or poems, leading by degrees to the most valued treasures of the fine arts among ancient civilizations to the present day, what can we say about the nature of art in relation to what it is that every person does in making an artwork?

Taking our cue from Wittgenstein's opening remark in introducing the *Tractatus* picture theory of meaning, it seems reasonable to begin at least with the hypothesis that art is somehow akin to language. It may be worthwhile first to review some of the positive analogies between linguistic and artistic practices. Both are apparently distinctively human activities, and in their developed forms more particularly are activities unique to modern human beings. Although written languages do not appear in the cultural record until about three thousand years ago, we have grounds to believe that some forms of spoken languages were well established even before our species evolved, and hence, like art, characterized modern human life from its very inception. Like language, art is something requiring a certain amount of skill, that can be exercised more or less proficiently, and that permits in principle a wide range of individual expression. As Wittgenstein is aware, if language is a kind of picturing, then in a certain sense even our precursor hominid ancestors, insofar as they were capable of expressing themselves in language, were also in effect practicing art by making verbal pictures of facts. If this application seems too farfetched, we should nevertheless acknowledge the sense in which language can be poetic or prosaic, and in which written language can be as ornate in its calligraphy or pictographic and hieroglyphic styles as many other artforms. Until relatively recently, when reading and writing became democratized in literate societies, the ability to read and write was the jealously protected prerogative of a specially trained priesthood, as much involved in the ritual articulation of visual images as in inscribing court records, taxes, stores and history, and religious events.

The concept is fueled by an obvious analogy. If we think of language as expressive, a public way of expressing ideas, and if we think of language as sufficiently like art in certain ways, then it may be natural also to think of art as expressive. At the very least, we can entertain the hypothesis to see where if anywhere it leads. In language we use a conventional sign system to express our ideas in an almost endless variety of ways for as many kinds of ideas as thought

is capable of considering. We can talk and write about the beliefs we accept and doubts we have, about our feelings and hopes and dreams and aspirations; we can preserve memories and advance hypotheses, issue commands, keep track of questions and problems, consider philosophical problems, and unlimitedly many other things besides, such as recording thought as a relatively permanent *aide-de-memoire*. To a certain extent we can do the same kinds of things in artworks, although not always with the same degree of communicative success. By painting a caribou on a stretched skin we can express our desire for a bountiful hunt; by painting the so-called *Nightwatch* (*The Company of Frans Banning Cocq and Willem van Ruytenburgh*), Rembrandt, among other things, can express the prestige of a class of Amsterdam militia, the authority of office, implicit protection of the citizenry, the individual attitudes of the musketeers, and possibly the ever presence of his beloved wife Saskia, if the woman dressed in white in a pool of illumination is her cameo portrait in the work; by painting *Guernica*, Picasso can express his horror of war, disillusionment about the future of mankind, outrage at the first use of air warfare against civilians, and many other things besides. If all art expresses ideas, even if we must often guess and imperfectly try to interpret what those ideas might be, then it might be reasonable to define art as a kind of nonlinguistic expression, to understand different styles, genres and schools of art as different ways of expressing ideas or as concerned with different particular kinds of ideas, devoted to religious ideas or to an ideal of harmony with nature or to an existential outlook about the human condition.

The theory of art as expression has a well established pedigree. It exists in a variety of guises that do not always expressly refer to themselves as expressivistic. The most conspicuous sources for this kind of aesthetic theory are John Dewey's *Art as Experience* and Arthur Berndtson's *Art, Expression, and Beauty*.[8] The same kind of theory is nevertheless to be found in any philosophical attempt to define art in terms of an artist's intentions in producing an artwork, such as Stephen Davies's more recent attempt in his recent book *Definitions of Art* to defend such a concept against William K. Wimsatt, Jr. and Monroe C. Beardsley's assault against expressivism in their landmark essay, 'The Intentional Fallacy'.[9] Even Clive Bell's formalist theory of *Art*, justly famous and influential in Susanne K. Langer's formalist aesthetics in *Feeling and Form*, appears only superficially to characterize art exclusively in terms of its forms entirely at the expense of content, but defines the uniquely aesthetic quality of artworks more precisely as *significant* form.[10] An intentionalist philosopher of language such as Roderick M. Chisholm, Joseph Margolis, or John R. Searle could hardly ask for a more suggestive parallel in the philosophy of art, depending, of course, on how significance is understood and what is packed into the concept.[11] The significantly formal aspects of language, from ordinary languages to symbolic logics and computer programming codes, testify in any case to the continuity rather than sharp division between art and language.

If we turn to Berndtson as a central figure in expressivist aesthetics, we find that he implausibly limits the expressive dimension of art exclusively to the expression of emotions. There is no reason to doubt that much of art is expressive in precisely this way, and, whereas Bell and Langer emphasize the formal aspects of art in the concept of significant form, Berndtson pays homage to Schopenhauer, Santayana, Benedetto Croce, C.J. Ducasse, as well as Antonio Caso, Theodore M. Greene, Bell and Langer, the latter of whom speak especially of expressive form, but oddly in this context nowhere mentions Dewey's pragmatic theory of the emotively expressive act and emotively expressive object. (Berndtson, 147, n.1) Berndtson writes:

> It is not sufficient to think of expression as a relation of form and emotion, by virtue of which emotion or the self is clarified and made free and beauty is brought into being. It is necessary, among other matters, to consider how emotion is related to the expressing form, how clarity and freedom arise among other changes in emotion, and how beauty enters the expressive act./The appropriate analysis may well start with a consideration of the unstudied range of meaning of the word *expression*. In the simplest context, the term can be applied to the act of squeezing water out of a sponge: the water literally is expressed from the sponge. An angry animal is said to express its emotion by growling and snapping. Concepts are expressed in words and sentences. And in the most complex context, emotion is expressed in a work of art. (147)

What we must wonder is whether art is always and only emotionally expressive, or whether there are not other ways in which art expresses and things other than emotions it can also express. The problem becomes acute when, to borrow just enough of Wimsatt and Beardsley's evidence without lapsing into their draco-

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[8] John Dewey, especially chapters IV and V, 58-105. Arthur Berndtson 1969, especially chapters 4, 8 and 9 (59-84; 144-192).
[9] Stephen Davies 1991, 181-221. William K. Wimsat, Jr. and Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy", *The Sewanee Review*, 54, 1946, 468-488.

[10] Clive Bell, *Art* [1913], New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1981. Susanne K. Langer, (1953).
[11] Roderick M. Chisholm, "The Primacy of the Intentional", *Synthese*, 61, 1984, 89-110; 1981. Joseph Morgolis 1980, especially chapter 8. John R. Searle 1969; 1976; 1999.

nian anti-intentionalist conclusion, neither an artist nor critic can confidently identify an emotion as underlying the production of an artwork. Must we even then say that the art object nevertheless must express an emotion, but one that is perhaps in Freudian terms sublimated or subconscious, or that the artist in self-deception has hidden away behind a punishing superego? In any other field of inquiry, such desperate moves would rightly be regarded as unconscionable theory-saving. Berndstson is well aware of the need to support his concentration on the use of art to express emotion, when he later adds:

> The theory of art as expression accords to emotion the primary place in art, and devotes the greater part of its energy as theory to the description and understanding of the relations, transformation, and consequences of emotion in art. Here it stands in clear contrast to the theories of art as representation and as form, which find a secondary or incidental place for emotion in art, or deny it altogether./The emphasis on emotion requires justification..Apart from any theory of the essence of art, it was stated [in a previous chapter] that emotion has important relations to value, experience, and thought, which justify and even require its entry into the aesthetic experience. It was shown that aesthetic form implies emotion, whether in sensation, the choice and methods of representation, or in the diverse types of aesthetic structure. (150-51)

Part of the answer lies in Berndtson's definition of the concept of emotion, which he understands in this way:

> Emotion is the immediate awareness of value, and in expression that awareness achieves its most satisfying fulfillment. Emotion supplies to art an imposing matter and problem, and expression supplies a solution equal to the task. In this solution lies the only balance between life and art that aesthetic theory can discover: through emotion art draws without limit on life, and through expression it achieves a unique status and value that sets it apart from the rest of life. (151)

A similar commitment to art as specifically emotional expression by way of a necessary connection between emotion and expression and the view that all expression is emotional is found in Dewey's *Art as Experience*, when he argues:

> Emotional discharge is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of expression./There is no expression without excitement, without turmoil. (61)

It does not take a master of the counterexample method as subtle as Socrates to see that Dewey's or Berndtson's concept of emotion will hardly do on its own or

in the context of his application in the theory of art as emotive expression. Without going so far as to accuse Berndtson of adjusting data to fit theory, it may still be cautioning to recall Wittgenstein's remark in *Philosophical Investigations* §593, where he refers to "A main cause of philosophical disease — a one-sided diet: one nourishes one's thinking with only one kind of example."[12]

The value of which emotion stands in immediate awareness according to Berndtson requires further clarification. It appears more consistent with the facts revealed by introspection that the immediate awareness of value is generally one thing, and the emotional overlay that sometimes accompanies such recognition is something else. I perceive the (negative) value of an insult or gross act of moral misconduct, and my anger about it, if I happen to experience any such emotion, is something else again that may not occur until later. If I am angry about paying my income taxes when I sign my check to the IRS with a violent sweep of the pen in recognition of the value of the money I am sending away have I created a work of art? If I work for the Treasury Department and it is my daily job to sort through currency to distinguish legal tender from counterfeits, then I might immediately recognize the monetary value of a bill as I place it on one pile, without feeling any particular emotion or feeling whatsoever, let alone an aesthetically relevant emotion, beyond the desire to do my work correctly or take an early lunch. On other occasions I may experience a flood of emotion, say, of anxiety, without even knowing why. What if I am a production potter, engaged in a reptitious routine I have mastered and executed many times as I make what is in fact an extraordinarily beautiful and valuable piece of pottery? In such circumstances, I may happen to experience no other emotion than boredom, or something quite aesthetically irrelevant, such as a feeling of regret for saying something impolite to a stranger many years ago.

Suppose that in answering a telephone call from the police I feel an intense emotion before I know whether the news is good, bad, or indifferent, possibly the result of nothing more portentious than a wrongly dialed number. If defending Berndtson in such cases requires us to say that any contact with the police is portentious with some value, then the thesis is threatened with triviality. In that case, whenever we are conscious we are constantly experiencing an aesthetically significant immediate recognition of value of stronger or weaker degree, at least of relief. If there is never a moment when we are not experiencing an emotion then there is no contrast to be drawn between recognizing value and not recognizing value. In a related case, it appears that I can perceive the aesthetic value of

[12] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigatios* [1953], third edition, translated by G.E.M. Anscombe, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1968.

a child's drawing, but without experiencing any particular emotion, until I realize that the drawing is something I made as a child, and I am suddenly transported back to a kindergarten classroom or a sunny patch of carpet at grandma's house. Berndtson must say that recognizing the value of the drawing by definition is itself an emotion, regardless of whether it is experienced with anything even remotely resembling the phenomenology of emotions as the concept of emotion is usually understood. As a final counterexample, consider the following dilemma. If I wake up with an unaccountable feeling of joy on a work day, must we say in order to accept Berndtson's thesis that this is my recognition of the positive value of work, even if at the time I refuse to assent to any such explanation? And if on the other hand I wake up on such a day with an otherwise unaccountable feeling of depression or dark despair, must we say in order to accept Berndtson's thesis that this is my recognition of the negative value of having to work for a living, even if at the time I refuse to assent to any such explanation?

If we are obligated to extend Berndtson's analysis to cover situations in which an artist immediately values something enough to choose it as a subject for an artwork as an emotion, then the same should be true of any choice of anything anyone does as an immediate recognition of the value of the thing as worth doing. Then whatever anyone does in any walk of life must qualify as the expression of emotion and hence as art. It might be reasonable to treat absolutely everything a person does as an artwork, but Berndtson does not want to collapse the distinction between artistic and nonartistic practices into art, and neither do most philosophers of art. The point is to identify what is distinctive about art and the making of art; otherwise, we can simply avoid talk of emotions altogether as epiphenomenal to aesthetics and define art more directly as whatever people do. This, interestingly, emphasizing the evolutionary approach to pragmatism that characterizes his thought, is more or less what Dewey bravely argues. His concept of the 'impulses' to which all animals are subject and to which the motivation of human action is reduced suggests an unbroken line of continuity between animals and certainly in all actions of human agents as emotively expressive. The failure of a definition of art as the expression of emotion nevertheless need not entail the failure of a more general definition of art as a particular way of expressing ideas, among which emotions can be included as one category of thoughts among others. (Thomas 1952: 127-44; Tormey 1971; Sircello 1972)

3. Perception and Intentionality in the Philosophy of Art

The thesis that art is the expression of ideas seems right enough as far as it goes. Even if art is expression or if expression is indispensable to the concept of art, however, it remains equally true that art cannot adequately be explained as expression. The reason goes to the heart of an important division in art theory and aesthetic philosophy, between two ways of thinking about the nature of art, from the standpoint of production and consumption, and the complementary perspectives of artist and appreciator or audience. There is a synergy that exists between these two poles, involving both what goes into the making of art and the experience of art by perceivers other than the artist, without an adequate account of which the nature, meaning, and value of art cannot be fully understood.

We can divide many aesthetic theories into those that mistakenly focus exclusively or excessively on the manufacture of art from the artist's standpoint to the neglect of the audience or spectator standpoint, and those that mistakenly focus exclusively or excessively on the experience of art from the audience or spectator standpoint to the neglect of the artist's standpoint. Art in its entirety is nevertheless a cooperation between both its producers and consumers. This is true not only in the most abstract sense that such conspicuously important moments in the making, use, and enjoyment of art need to be included in a complete account simply because they are elements in the process by which art is made and the purpose for which it is made, from considerations of its success or failure both for and from the perspective of those who produce and those who consume artworks, but because artists themselves judge their effects on audiences or spectators in a kind of feedback loop that includes criticism of many different kinds including immediate reactions on the part of those who experience and interact with art, and involves their own adoption of these distinct roles during the creative process.[13]

If we reconsider the analogy between expression in language and art, we dis-

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[13] Dewey is more sensitive than some emotive expressivists to the interrelation between the artist's expressive act and expressive object; see *Art as Experience*, 82-105. See 82: "Expression, like construction, signifies both an action and its result. The last chapter considered it as an act. We are now concerned with the product, the object that is expressive, that says something to us." The problem in understanding art as emotional expression from the viewer or audience standpoint is that such meaning is often irrecoverable from a third-person perspective. A similar difficulty impedes intentionalist theories of expression in philosophical semantics and the philosophy of language.

cover remarkable continuities and even more significant disanalogies. We ordinarily expect that discursive language, verbal or written, is the expression of a thinker's ideas that are relatively easy for a listener or reader to correctly decipher. If I utter a simple declarative sentence, such as 'Paris is the capital of France', I have expressed an idea, and might even do so with an accompanying state of emotion in recognition of the value of that fact or at least the truth value of the proposition. Whoever is linguistically competent in English will clearly understand what I have said and be able to gather from the sentence at least the denotation of the state of affairs I have expressed, if not absolutely all of the deeper subtleties, connotations, and psychological associations that the sentence might have for me in making the pronouncement. There is enough transparent communication of the idea I have expressed to make it possible for someone else to proceed with confidence, other things being equal, in knowing what I intend to say without confusion or misunderstanding.

As we move from the expression of categorical propositions or belief in simple states of affairs, things begin to get progressively more complicated and progressively more philosophically interesting. If I try to express an emotion or a state of mind more opaque to another person than a straightforward statement of fact, then my use of language is equally expressive, but more difficult for another person to accurately interpret. The reason is that where first-person psychological occurrences are concerned, it can be challenging in the extreme to articulate the exact content of mental state even for one's own purposes, let alone in such a way that another person can take away from the linguistic expression a clear idea of what is being said. As we continue along the spectrum of expressive uses of language from beliefs in states of affairs to expressions of emotion and other psychological states toward more artistic uses of language in poetry, song lyrics and librettos and the like, we encounter linguistic expressions whose exact meaning can be increasingly difficult for persons other than the author to fully grasp.[14]

To focus for the moment on poetry, we can think of it as an activity or

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[14] The distinction between speaker meaning and hearer meaning is widely recognized in philosophical semantics and philosophy of language. Among the most discussed and nuanced treatments of the subject beyond those mentioned above in note 12 are H. Paul Grice, "Meaning," *The Philosophical Review*, 66, 1957, 377-388; "Utterer's Meaning, Sentence-Meaning, and Word-Meaning," *Fundamentals of Language*, 4, 1968, 225-242. These and related essays are reprinted, some in updated form, in Grice, 1989. Saul A. Kripke, "Speaker's Reference and Semantic Reference," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, ed. Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling, Jr., and Howard K. Wettstein, 2, 1977, 255-276.

product of an activity involving the use of words and sentences that is equally both language and art. Poetry is undoubtedly expressive, but importantly for present purposes, the more artistic or art like the use of language is in poetry, the more typically opaque its meanings and elusive its exact interpretation. If the standard of accuracy for understanding the content of poetry is supposed to be the recovery of the ideas an author intends and attempts to express in linguistic art or artistic language, then poetry is more like other kinds of art precisely in the obstacles it presents to the easy recovery of meaning when compared with descriptive scientific prose. It is a commonplace that the most intriguing poetry and the sort most often thought to succeed as art involves a kind of writing whose meaning does not immediately and univocally reveal itself, but that suggests multiple meanings and, unlike 'Paris is the capital of France', may support an entirely different kind of interpretation every time we reflect on its content. Such poetry has depth and rewards frequent contemplation and rethinking, and captures in a word image a moment or scene that we appreciate more or less depending on the extent of our own personal experience to which we can relate in different ways at different times in our lives. Consider a few lines from Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* that evoke a mood and convey a certain amount of information, but are not easily nailed down in terms of exact meaning, when Troilus speaks:

> And suddenly, where injury of chance
> Puts back leave-taking, justles roughly by
> All time of pause, rudely beguiles our lips
> Of all rejoindure, forcibly prevents
> Our locked embrasures, strangles our dear vows
> Even in the birth of our own labouring breath.
> We two, that with so many thousand sighs
> Did buy each other, must poorly sell ourselves
> With the rude brevity and discharge of one.
> Injurious time now with a robber's haste
> Crams his rich thiev'ry up, he knows not how
> As many farewells as be stars in heaven,
> With distinct breath and consigned kisses to them,
> He fumbles up into a loose adieu,
> And scants us with a single famished kiss,
> Distasted with the salt of broken tears. (IV.4.32-47)

The Elizabethan theater was an artificial linguistic environment as well as a scene of plot and spectacle, action and humor. Its taste demanded an artful use of lan-

guage, in which patrons delighted just as we do today in an author's poetic use of language as a pleasing exercise in linguistically crafting comic and dramatic dialogue for its own sake as well as for the story and its moral and the play of emotions it occasions.

The language of the Elizabethan theater was very much a product of art catering to a desire for poetic fabrications interwoven comic and dramatic effects. The audience in Shakespeare's time on the whole would have needed to puzzle over many passages of his beautiful and captivatingly dense verse, rhymed and blank, much as we still do today; that was and still remains a great part of its charm. Shakespeare undoubtedly expresses ideas, including emotions, his own and those of the characters whose situations he represents, in his writings and through the agency of the actors' voices and gestures when the plays are performed. The artistic purpose to which his language is put, in contrast with ordinary prose in the expression of belief in ordinary states of affairs, makes its artistic expression of ideas less accessible and easy to discern, more profound and resonant, and more variably recoverable, with greater potential for inaccuracy, and also for that reason more absorbing and stimulating of the imagination, than the use of language for the expression of simple states of affairs or belief in the existence of simple states of affairs. What Shakespeare says above, undoubtedly, cannot be taken literally but is rich in imagery, metaphor and simile.

Turning now from language in prosaic and poetic applications to nonlinguistic art, to drawing, etching, printmaking, painting, sculpture, music, architecture, flower arranging, and other fine and decorative arts, we proceed along an extended continuum that begins with the expression of facts in language to emotions and then to poetry and finally to the other arts. All are expressive, justifying the formula by which art is said to be the expression of ideas in media other than language. Even personal styles of dress are expressive in this sense, if not always of an identifiable proposition or attitude then of individual taste. To an even greater degree than is demonstrated in the distinction between statements of fact and the most artistic uses of language in poetry, expression in the nonlinguistic arts may be as exact as or even more exact than ordinary language from the artist's standpoint, but whose meaning or intention expressed in art may be difficult if not sometimes impossible for an audience to discover.

What, exactly, did Piccasso mean to express by painting *Guernica*? What does Marcel Duchamp mean to express by exhibiting *Fountain*, a porcelain urinal, as a readymade artwork? What does Vermeer mean to express by painting the *Kitchen Maid*? Virtue? Domesticity? Loneliness? Social rank? Why not just the morning reverie of a pretty Dutch girl? In some cases, we may think we know what an artist intends, just as if the artist were to write out a series of sim-

ple declarative statements in ordinary language as a linguistic expression of easily discernible meaning. In other cases, we may find the meaning of an artwork endlessly ponderous, difficult or even impossible to decide. It is a familiar experience among persons who study an artwork whose meaning at first seems obvious that with time and greater maturity or different enhanced experiences to discover new things that previously were concealed, and sometimes to reverse one's judgment and appreciation of its meaning altogether, or at least to add to one's sense of what an artist might be trying to express in what has otherwise seemed to be an easily decipherable art object.[15]

The opacity of expression in nonlinguistic art from an audience point of view is so pronounced that philosophers have described the effort to interpret art in terms of an artist's intentions as a kind of fallacy. The 'intentional fallacy', a term coined by Wimsatt and Beardsley in their much-discussed essay in the philosophy of art, despair of being able to judge an artwork's meaning or value from the perspective of what an artist intends to express to such an extent that

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[15] To take just one example of a relatively recent, widely discussed and well-documented controversial artwork, consider Picasso's *Guernica*. Here are three reasonably authoritative interpretations of Picasso's largescale 1937 canvas. Anthony Blunt, in *Picasso's Guernica* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969, 56), summarizes the meaning of the painting in this way: "[Picasso's] aim in painting *Guernica* was the same as that of his predecessors: to give expression in visible form to his abhorrence of the evil which he saw in the world around him, and hereby, perhaps, to influence man, however slightly, toward better ways." Gertrude Stein, in contrast, who knew Picasso personally and had many opportunities to discuss his art with him, finds the main theme of the painting not to be as universal or its purpose one of the reform of mankind, but more momentary, nationalistic and nostalgic. In *Picasso* [French 1938] (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959, 47-48), Stein writes: "It was not the events themselves that were happening in Spain which awoke Picasso but the fact that they were happening in Spain, he has lost Spain and here was Spain not lost, she existed, the existence of Spain awakened Picasso, he too existed, everything that has been imposed upon him no longer existed, he has Spain, both of them existed, of course they existed, they exist, they are alive, Picasso commenced to work, he commenced to speak as he has spoken all his life, speaking with drawings and color, speaking with writing, the writing of Picasso." Picasso, himself, as quoted in Joaquin de la Puente's *Guernica: The Making of a Painting* (Monterreina: Silex, 1985, 122), has this to say: "This bull is a bull, this horse is a horse. There is also a sort of bird, a chicken or pigeon, I can't remember which, on the table. This chicken is a chicken. Yes, of course, the *symbols* ... *But the painter does not need to crate those symbols*. Otherwise, it would be better to write once and for all what one wants to write instead of painting it. *The public, the spectators, must see in the horse or in the bull symbols* (then the painter had created them!) *which they should interpret as they wish* ... That is, 'let the public see what it wants'."

they not only recommend abandoning the effort to understand art from the standpoint of the artist's intentions, but argue that it is always a mistake to try to bring an artist's intentions to bear on the interpretation of art.[16] This is a problem of perception, a problem for consumers of art who must try to interpret, assess and evaluate an artwork's meaning and merits. Insofar as artists in the complex interplay of roles in which they engage as both producer and critic of their own work are also perceivers of their own work, and insofar as artists may sometimes be unclear about their own intentions and exactly what it is they mean to express, insofar as the act of making art can be understood in turn as a method of clarifying what an artist wants to say, of physically thinking through a problem of expression in concrete terms as a process taking place over time, to that extent the problem of perceiving intention and discerning what is being expressed in art blurs the theoretical distinction between artist and audience, producer and consumer, active maker and passive perceiver of art.

There is a balanced commonsense point of view about interpreting art in relation to what an artist intends to express in a given artwork. We should not expect to have access to an artist's intentions in every case, and therefore we should not suppose that we can only understand an artwork when we can be sure that an artist means thereby to express a certain set of ideas. In those instances where we happen to have insight into what an artist intends, such as a reliable verbal description in a letter or diary, or that can be inferred circumstantially, it seems only reasonable to take advantage of the information in building up a reasonable hypothesis of how an artwork might best be interpreted. Why should we deliberately overlook such facts if they contribute to understanding what an artist means to express in producing a certain artwork merely in order to avoid what is supposed to be the intentional fallacy? If we agree that art is an expression of ideas, how can we afford to ignore whatever facts might be relevant in trying to uncover an artist's intentions and the particular ideas an artist may have wanted to express?

If we agree with Wimsatt and Beardsley that it is always a logical mistake to consult an artist's intentions in order to interpret and understand an artwork, then, given the continuity between linguistic and artistic expression mediated by poetry, it should follow that we must also adopt the same attitude toward understanding meaning in language, refusing on every occasion to consider an author's intentions as irrelevant to his or her meaning in linguistic expression. If that kind of limitation does not seem reasonable in the task of understanding expression in language, then it should be equally inappropriate to renounce information about an artist's intentions in interpreting and trying to understanding the meaning of art, beginning with linguistic artforms like poetry and literature, and the novels, plays and librettos that grade off insensibly into nonlinguistic painting, drawing, etching, printmaking, sculpture, music, and architecture.[17]

4. Ontology of Art and Salience of Perception in the Metaphysics of Culture

When a sentence is uttered or written, whether with pen and ink or chiseled into stone or inscribed by means of a pattern of magnetic traces on the surface of a plastic computer diskette, it is in some obvious sense a physical entity. It might also be said at the same time to represent an abstract meaning, which in turn might concern beliefs, hypotheses and emotions, among other thoughts and ideas. Much the same can be said of the cave painting as of the greatest works of fine art, or of any artifact hammer, computer, or the International Space Station.

These entities too in different ways can be thought of as embodying abstract relations, particularly in the case of the cave painting and the computer, but even by extension, if we stretch things far enough, for the hammer and the computer-assisted design and operation of the space station. Artworks and other artifacts are not themselves abstract entities, since all of these things are undeniably here

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[16] There is a sense in which Wimsatt and Beardsley's attack on the intentional fallacy fits into a tendency toward extensionalism and against 'psychologism' in philosophical semantics, epistemology, metaphysics and the philosophy of logic, mathematics, and language, and in support of behaviorism and other types of mind-body reductivism in philosophical psychology. Efforts to do away with first-person introspection and phenomenological inquiry or descriptive psychology as methodologically and ideologically suspect in favor of public, externalist or third-person perceivable properties of psychological subjects are among the after-effects of the heyday of logical positivism, which, oddly, have not suffered the same popular disavowal as positivism itself in the philosophy of science.

[17] For additional discussions of the intentional fallacy, see also Isabel Hungerland, "The Concept of Intention in Art Criticism", *The Journal of Philosophy*, 52, 1955, 733-742. Henry Aiken, "The Aesthetic Relevance of Artistis' Intentions," *The Journal of Philosophy*, 52, 1955, 742-753. Richard Kuhns, "Criticism and the Problem of Intention," *The Journal of Philosophy*, 57, 1960, 5-23. Frank Cioffi, "Intention and Interpretation in Criticism," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 64, 1963-1964, 85-106. J. Kemp, "The Work of Art and the Artist's Intentions," *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 4, 1964, 150-151. Berel Lang, "The Intentional fallacy Revisited," *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 14, 1974, 306-314. Anthony Savile, "The Place of Intention in the Concept of Art," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 69, 1968-1969, 101-124.

with us in real spacetime in the actual world, whereas abstract entities are sup-
posed to be nonspatiotemporal. We might nevertheless try to skate by with the
two most venerable established categories of physical and abstract entities by
classifying cultural entities of all kinds as physical entities embodying or mani-
festing certain special types of abstract properties, ideas, concepts, formal rela-
tions, or the like, and thus dispense with the need to go beyond the ontology of
physical and abstract things in order to account for the metaphysics of culture.
Would such an analysis of the ontology of language, art, and artifacts be satisfac-
tory?

There is an argument to suggest that cultural entities cannot simply be sub-
sumed by the pure traditional categories of physical and abstract entities, no
matter what other explanatory advantages they afford. The objection for good
reason is parallel to that offered in attempts to solve the mind-body problem, of
which the question of the ontic status of cultural entities can be seen as a par-
ticular related instance. The claim is that we cannot fully understand language,
art, and artifacts, cultural entities generally, except as perceivable public or exter-
nal expressions of the qualia and intentionality of thought. This is perhaps most
clear in the case of language used as a vehicle for recording and communicating
sensations, emotions, and ideas, but equally so in all of art, even the most mod-
ern abstract or supposedly nonrepresentational art.

Although artifacts other than language and artworks in the narrow sense are
not more obviously expressions of propositional meaning, they are nevertheless,
as Heidegger among others rightly recognizes, thoroughly intentional. Their
design, manufacture, and use are alike directed toward and embued with human
purpose. If I fashion a stone hammer by selecting a particular river-smoothed
stone and fastening it with leather thongs to a wooden heft, I am choosing, shap-
ing, assembling, and finally using physical objects in my immediate environment
with a certain end in mind. A boulder will not do if the hammer is supposed to
be used as a practical tool; that would make it too big and heavy, whereas I must
be able to lift it up and swing it down to drive in stakes or smash oyster shells. A
chunk of sandstone will also probably not serve, although I might experiment
with any variety of substances until I identify appropriate materials for my pur-
poses, because it will too easily shatter if I use the hammer as I am likely to want
to do in striking harder objects. When the hammer is made, no matter how in-
eptly, imperfectly, or incompletely, it represents, as much as any speech act or
artwork, a mind's intentions and the attempt to fulfill those intentions by acting
in and locally manipulating aspects of the physical world in the service of an idea,
in the partial fulfillment of an intention.

Minds and their concrete expressions in language, art, and artifacts can be

classified, accordingly, not as purely physical or purely abstract entities, but as
qualia-expressive intentional entities, being in every instance about something or
directed toward an intended object. The intended object of a use of language, or
the production or display of an artwork or other artifact, is often to express the
qualia of a thinker's thought. To paint a canvas or write a letter or sing the blues
is to clarify for oneself and make available to others a record of the content of
one's psychological states. Cultural entities are not themselves minds, and if they
embody or otherwise manifest thoughts they are not themselves mental occur-
rences. Here an important division between two kinds of intentional entities can
be adduced in the applied scientific ontology of cultural entities, based on a dis-
tinction first drawn by John R. Searle in his book, *Intentionality: An Essay in the
Philosophy of Mind*, between *intrinsic* and *derivative* intentionality.[18]

It is obvious enough, but bears reminding, that were it not for the existence
of minds there would and could be no culture. Language, art, and artifacts are
products of thought, in all instances their direct expression in physical perceiv-
able form. The same is true whether we are referring to a single sentence uttered
by an early hominid or all of world literature, a cave painting or the *œuvre* of
Michelangelo or Salvador Dalí, a stone hammer used to crack oyster shells or the
International Space Station. An intentionalist philosophy implies that cultural
entities, like the minds that through physical agency produce them, are inten-
tional entities, and as such require a special category of the preferred existence
domain that is beyond and distinct from physical and abstract entities. Cultural
entities have physical and abstract properties, just as physical entities have ab-
stract properties and enter into abstract relations, such as the abstract property
of being divisible or atomic. We may accordingly consider a three-part philoso-
phical ontology that includes physical, abstract, and minds qualia-bearing inten-
tional entities, to be sufficient also for cultural entities, without interposing yet
another, fourth, category of existent things. The explanation of thought in lan-
guage, art, and artifacts is intentional in the correct sense of the word insofar as
these cultural entities are about something or directed toward an intended ob-
ject, and perceptually expressive of the content of a state of mind. Artworks and
other artifacts and cultural entities can be included in the three-part ontology of
the physical, abstract, and intentional, if we consider them in every case to be the
perceivable derivatively intentional expressions of intrinsically intentional mental
states, including, perhaps prominently, but not limited to, emotions.

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[18] Searle, 1983, 5, 22, 27-28, 167-168, 175-176. Searle, "Minds, Brains, and Programs," *The
Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 3, 1980, 422-424; also Searle's reply to critics in the "Au-
thor's Response" section under the title, "Intrinsic Intentionality," 450-456.

The sentence, 'It is raining', is about a meteorological state of affairs, and ordinarily expresses a belief that the state of affairs obtains. It is true or false, moreover, depending on the actual state of the world, the existence or nonexistence of the corresponding state of affairs the sentence is intended to represent and the belief it is meant to express. The cave painting is about the bison depicted, real or imaginary, and the state of affairs, existent or otherwise, of its being struck by an arrow. It may represent the fears of the artist, the hope for a successful hunt, or something of more metaphorical or religious significance as a cult object. The possibilities, thanks to conventional symbolism and psychological association, and the logical detachment of the content of thought from its intended objects, are potentially limitless. The same analysis explains the collective intentionality that stands behind social institutions such as customs, etiquettes, religious and secular observances, mating and marriage, the use of money as a medium of exchange, and all other aspects of culture.

An artifact like a hammer, computer, or space station, is likewise the expression of purpose, of varying degrees of complexity, but equally a product of thought and concrete embodiment of the idea or ideas of a mind or many minds acting in concert intentionally and for the sake of realizing an intention. We can often grasp shared or imaginable purposes directly from the object, and even when we are wrong in our assumptions, it is significant that we find it irresistible in such cases to see the work of mind in the creation of such things. Thus, a hammer is about hammering, about the things its makers and users intend to do with it. Similarly for much more complicated and sophisticated instruments like a digital computer or the space station.

To such an extent is intentionality inherent in art and all purposeful artifacts that even when a tool or like object, a hammer or a cup or bowl, becomes so damaged that it is no longer able to fulfill its function, the entity does not simply return to nature, at least not immediately, but, as Heidegger charmingly puts it in *Being and Time*, even on the rubbish heap, it 'bids farewell' to we thinkers and makers. Heidegger's remarks on the evidence of purpose, design, and care in broken implements establish his ontology of culture as intentionalist:

> Beings nearest at hand can be met up with in taking care of things as unusable, as improperly adapted for their specific use. Tools turn out to be damaged, their material unsuitable. In any case, *a useful thing* of some sort is at hand here. But we discover the unusability not by looking and ascertaining properties, but rather by paying attention to the associations in which we use it. When we discover its unusability, the thing becomes conspicuous. *Conspicuousness* presents the thing at hand in a certain unhandiness. In its conspicuousness, obtrusive-

ness, and obstinacy, what is at hand loses its character of handiness in a certain sense. But this handiness is itself understood, although not thematically, in associating with what is at hand. It does not just disappear, but bids farewell, so to speak, in the conspicuousness of what is unusable. Handiness shows itself once again, and precisely in doing so the worldly character of what is at hand also shows itself, too. (68-69)

The cup, broken in a fall, unable to hold tea, still 'says' that it was once something useful, something intended for a specific use, capable in its glory days of fulfilling a practical purpose. We can read intentionality even into a ruined artifact, as when we visit the sites of abandoned ancient cities like Machu Picchu or Aphrodisias. Here we see clearly a largescale object that is not merely a work of nature, the result of natural forces acting at random, but an artifact first shaped in thought and then fashioned by hand or with the help of other tools or machines by many persons in a relatively advanced state of technology.

We might also reflect in this connection on how the trained archaeologist and anthropologist is able (fallibly) to distinguish between natural objects and humanmade artifacts that to the layperson's unskilled eye seem indistinguishable. A good example is the flint scraping tools that are hard to discern from the flakes of flint that may have splintered from a block through entirely natural processes without the hand of a human tool-maker deliberately guided by intention and purpose with a certain end and a certain standard in mind. It is not an occult practice, but a rather exact science, to distinguish such tools and tool fragments from naturally occurring shards of identical stone. The tricks of the trade can be taught to virtually any patient novice, so that it becomes possible also to see as the experts do the subtle distinctions between such kinds of natural and early human cultural entities.

We discriminate between multiple subcategories of physical objects. There are physical forces, fields, and micro- and macrophysical entities, particles and complexes, molecules and atoms and the like. We similarly distinguish between multiple subcategories of abstract entities, particulars like numbers and sets, and universals such as properties, qualities and relations. In the third main ontological category of intrinsically qualia-bearing intentional entities, we may similarly find it expedient, following Searle's distinction, to acknowledge separate subcategories for intrinsically intentional entities, minds as originating sources of qualia and intentionality, and perceivable derivatively intentional and qualia-expressive entities, including all cultural entities, all speech acts in language, art, and artifacts. Perceivable derivatively intentional cultural entities are about something or expressive of qualia only by virtue of having been chosen by

thought as a medium for the derivatively intentional expression of intrinsically intentional meaning, thought and purpose, idea, sensation, emotion, desire, and will.

Even the broken teacup speaks to sensitive eyes as having another, special, kind of property, a former purpose, a former use, ministering to an intention that cannot in turn be adequately understood in terms of its physical or abstract qualities and relations alone. It partakes derivatively of the intrinsic intentionality of thought to which it owes its existence, and as such is not purely and not merely a physical entity. It is for the same reason that the mind itself on the property dualist conception is not purely and not merely the body, the neurophysiology of brain and nervous system integrated into the somatic matrix of a living psychological subject. If cultural artifacts are as much dual aspect entities as the minds that create them, then, like the mind, they require special provision in a third main category of a preferred existence domain. The world of culture, as Karl R. Popper, in *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*, for quite different reasons, has also maintained is a third distinct ontological realm, a World 3.[19] The subdomain of cultural entities constitutes a third world as a distinct classification within applied scientific ontology. Physical, abstract, and intentional entities exist in the combinatorial analysis of the concept of being as maximally consistent property combinations, including physically and abstractly irreducible derivatively intentional and qualia-expressive properties.

It might be thought that while the plastic arts like painting and sculpture are readily absorbed into the category of physical entities in the existence domain, other so to speak more formal or mathematical arts like music and even poetry and literature might be taken without residue into the category of abstract entities in the preferred existence domain of an ontology of culture. To consider only music, as offering perhaps the strongest argument for this type of ontological reduction, it is clear that music is not only the abstract relations that it exemplifies but tone qualities, rhythm and tempo in real time, and, more importantly, expression and expressiveness that is evidently an intentional property originating with the intrinsically intentional qualia-bearing thoughts of composers, conductors, and performers, intended to be received and to elicit certain qualia and intentional psychological responses in an audience, that cannot be adequately reduced to or explained in terms of the music's abstract mathematical forms. It

is an art that speaks expressively from and to the human soul in a way that is not simply a matter of abstract relations of melody and harmony, essential though these are to the ontology of music.

The same can be said, it should be emphasized, of any artform and of any expressive use of language or purposeful design, manufacture or use of any artifact. An extreme example that makes an important point about the comparative insignificance of the physical substance chosen for artistic purposes is in so-called found-object art, in which an artist selects and exhibits a readymade entity of no special aesthetic quality, such as a porcelain bathroom fixture, as an expression of choice within the conventions of an artistic community. We cannot begin to understand the ontology of any of these cultural entities except as expressions of the qualia and intentionality of thought, as creations of mind, and attempts to satisfy an intended purpose. When we recognize the expression of mental content and intention in language, art, and artifacts, then we appreciate the need to include cultural entities in a third category of psychological or psychology-related existents distinct from the purely physical and abstract things in which cultural entities are embodied and whose properties they exemplify.[20]

5. Perception, Intentionality and Expression in the Aesthetics of Art and Nature

We have identified several ways in which perception is involved in the creative act of making and appreciating art. Without paying due attention to both the producer and consumer ends of art we cannot hope to fully understand the dynamics of artworks. When we consider what is involved in producing and enjoying art, we find the concepts of perception, intentionality, and expression tightly intertwined.

Art, like other forms of expression, begins with perception. We are inspired by the things we experience in sensation. We recognize beauty or we are otherwise moved to express what we perceive or how we feel about what we perceive. We can express such ideas in a variety of ways, in language, art, and in other

[19] The original statement of Popper's concept of World 3 appears in Karl R. Popper 1972, especially 31, 74-75, 106-128. Brian Carr, "Popper's Third World," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 27, 1977. William Max Miller, "Popper's Third World: A Methodological Critique and Alternative," *Dialogue*, 24, 1981.

[20] A nonreductivist metaphysics of culture is offered by Margolis, 1999, "The Identity of a Work of Art," *Mind*, 68, 1959; "Works of Art as Physically Embodied and Culturally Emergent Entities," *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, 14, 1974; "The Ontological Peculiarity of Works of Art," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 37, 1979; "Artworks and the History of Production," *Communication and Cognition*, 17, 1984; "Constraints on the Metaphysics of Culture," Michael Krausz and Richard Shusterman, editors, 1999. See also Searle's account of interpersonal intentionality in Searle, 1995.

ways, including such simple acts as smiling or frowning, hugging or fleeing the presence of another person. These latter modes of expressing our thoughts are neither linguistic nor artistic, but are continuous with speech acts and art making as outlets for the need we have to make our thoughts perceptible to ourselves and others in communication. We use language and make art as we engage in other activities in order to express ourselves, to produce something tangible and hence perceivable for the sake of leaving a more or less permanent record of our ideas, of sharing them with others, or interacting with them at a number of perceptual and cognitive levels and testing their reactions to what we think, and of helping to clarify for our own purposes what it is we believe and how we feel.

Aesthetic experience is not limited to art, because beauty and ugliness and everything in between goes beyond the works of mind and hand by which thoughts are expressed in or outside of language, and in the overlap between art and language. Perception is essential to aesthetics generally, and in the original meaning of the word as it was introduced to the philosophical vocabulary in eighteenth century German was first to any sense experience or 'intuition'. If we are hoping to extend what we have concluded here about the interrelated factors of perception, intention and expression in art to aesthetics, what can we say to bridge the gap between beauty in art and beauty in nature? There are several possibilities. If we think that the world is the artwork of a divine supernatural artisan, then the application is immediate and straightforward. God in a creative act intends to express something that might be inscrutable to us but that we experience as a kind of beauty. The objectivist in art in that case, to return to our beginning theme, is correct to regard beauty and aesthetic value generally as independent at least of individual finite human minds rather than subjective in the usual sense.

Theism and belief in the supernatural aside, what can the skeptical aesthetic philosopher maintain about the concept of natural beauty? If a beautiful field of flowers does not express a divine artist's ideas, or if, on independent metaphysical grounds, a transcendent being cannot causally intervene in the physical universe, what other explanations can there be for the aesthetic qualities outside of art? A potentially revolutionary suggestion that reverses the usual order of expectation is that we first learn about beauty from art and then apply the aesthetics of made things to the unmade world of nature rather than the other way around. If what we have said above is right, then there may be no better account of the appreciation for beauty and other aesthetic qualities in nature. Such an explanation for the perception in and attribution of aesthetic qualities to the natural world fits neatly with a parallel account of the concept of causation that has frequently been said to originate with reflection on the human agent's capac-

ity for action projected into the impersonal forces of nature in the form of physical laws.[21]

We often assume that the first neolithic artists were moved by the appreciation of the aesthetics of the natural world to try to imitate such qualities on a lesser scale in representational art. From such a perspective the idea that the beauty of art comes first and then we learn to see the world as a kind of artwork seems to have things upsidedown. The impression, while compelling in its way, need not be correct. We can resist the overly simplisitic picture of natural beauty taking priority over artistic beauty if we recognize that an artwork of something nonbeautiful can itself be beautiful, brilliantly executed and demonstrating skillful control and attention to detail. The expressive object of art as a derivatively intentional expression of an artist's ideas can be beautiful even when what it represents has no special aesthetic qualities of its own. We do not know nor do we have any special reason to think that early modern human artists thought that bisons were beautiful as opposed to totemic, powerful, or nourishing; even if they found their paintings and carvings of them on cave interiors or spear handles beautiful. It is perfectly possible from everything we currently know about early art making that the first artists developed the concept of beauty and related aesthetic values from their own standards of pleasure in the work of their own hands and only afterward applied them by analogy to some but not all of the things around them in the world of nature.

Does this conclusion also answer our first question, whether beauty is objective or subjective? The right solution might be to refine and requalify the question. All the elements that enter into judgments of beauty exist objectively in nature, for all that this approach to the problem has to say. If the concept of beauty originates with a human appreciation for the qualities of human art carried over thereafter into the perception of the natural world, then beauty in one sense is undoubtedly subjective. If what we mean by an aesthetic quality is a property first and foremost of artworks, however, then there may be an objective answer to the question whether this or that object in art or nature is beautiful, depending on whether or not it conforms to the standards set by an appreciation for the beauty in art with which the concept originates. This is slender

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[21] See Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Active Powers of Man*, Essay IV, Ch. 4, in *The Works of Thomas Reid, D.D.*, edited by William Hamilton (Edinburgh: Maclachlan & Stewart, 1854, 524): "... the conception of an efficient cause may very probably be derived from the experience we hve had ... of our own power to produce certain effects." Chisholm, "Freedom and Action," in Keith Lehrer (ed.), *Freedom and Determinism*. New York: Random House, 1966, 22.

consolation, unfortunately, since these standards are not only lost in time but most probably incorporated from the very beginning a wide range of differing opinions about what constitutes positive aesthetic value in art. The category of beauty and aesthetic appreciation might have begun historically and from the standpoint of philosophical anthropology with human-made art and was only later extended or projected onto nature. If our species originally came to appreciate a sunset because it is like a watercolor, we are by no means prevented from admiring a watercolor because it is so like a sunset.[22]

3
Representation and Expression, Repainted

John W. Bender

As a philosopher of art, I am, of course, interested in how artworks refer, represent, and express. It might appear to run at odds with these interests that I am also an *abstract* painter. Yet there is, in fact, little or no intellectual tension here, not only because abstract paintings are often and manifestly expressive, but also (yet perhaps less obviously) because various forms of reference are ubiquitous in abstract paintings, and again, because the concepts of abstraction and representation are not set against each other in some eternal dichotomy.

My interest here is to argue for, and attempt to illustrate with my paintings, a number of explicit theses about pictorial reference, representation and expression. But in the course of doing this, I hope also to clarify the conceptual and logical relations among these notions, as well as their connections to depiction, denotation, and exemplification. I shall argue that:

a. paintings are engaged in many and varied forms of reference, even in the case of abstract painting;

b. realistic representation, abstract formalism, and abstract expressionism can be viewed in a roughly continuous manner rather than as in opposition, since, in each case, reference is involved;

c. both representation and expression are modes of pictorial reference; yet *contra* Goodman,

d. representation is not denotation of an object by a painting, and

e. expression is not the metaphorical denotation of a painting by an expressive predicate.

So, although I agree with a broadly semantic or semiotic theory of the functions of art, or at least painting and the related plastic arts, I ultimately think that Nelson Goodman's justly famous and subtle theory has gotten some really significant things roughly *backwards*. And backwards is never a good direction for art or aesthetic theorizing.

Reference, Depiction and Abstraction

The well-known epistemologist and recently avid painter, Keith Lehrer, has said that, at least for him, "depiction is the nemesis of artistic representation."(2003) One can guess that, as an abstract painter, I sympathize with this aphorism, but this point cannot be quite right if there is anything to the idea, already mentioned, that there is a continuity between representation and abstraction. Realistic depictions refer to objects by representing a significant number of their visual aspects and details in order to provide a sensory experience that is similar in those aspects to the direct experience of the objects. Kendall Walton is right when he says depiction has to be reasonably rich and vivid.(1990:296) Depiction is an extreme form of representation, and portraiture is perhaps the paradigm instance of depiction. Portraits of persons are the most obvious cases—a portrait of Napoleon, e.g., functions rather analogously to a definite description of Napoleon. A painting can represent the strong, imperious general who is Napoleon. Reference here is unique and singular.

But portraiture can occur even in a seemingly abstract painting. Consider this painting, entitled "Wilmarth's Bridge" [Fig. 1]. For all its apparent abstraction, this is a portrait of Christopher Wilmarth's glass and steel sculpture, "The Gift of the Bridge," 1975-76, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT, [Fig. 2].
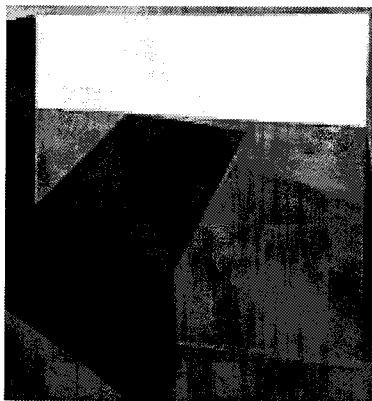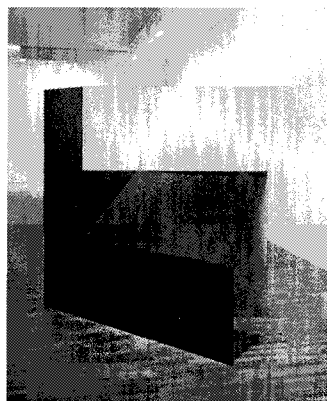

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

I meant to capture the abstract features of the sculpture as accurately as my rather meager representational abilities allowed, because I found what Wilmarth had done so intriguing, and because the idea of making a portrait of another work of art, a sculpture, was interesting from an art-theoretical point of view. (Consider that you cannot paint a portrait of another painting but only make a copy or study of it. Portraiture must portray something from another kind or category, it seems.)

Reference, here, is definite and specific—I meant to refer to a particular object and depict it as best I could. The painting is abstract only to the extent that the sculpture is abstract. The sculpture's abstraction is represented here, we might say.

But most abstract paintings don't depict in this way; they refer but are not interested in depicting. The functions of reference are varied, and certainly not always depictional or realistic. Yet abstract paintings can, and often do, represent worldly objects. They do so, not to realistically depict them, but to say something of a more abstract nature about them. One method of doing this is to represent a feature or two of an object in order to *fix the reference*, so that we know *what* the abstract point of the painting is directed toward.

This is a relatively early painting, which I entitled "Desert Diebenkorn," [Fig. 3] because I was both in the Sonoran Desert around Tucson, and studying the work of Richard Diebenkorn at the time (See "Ocean Park #66," Fig. 4).
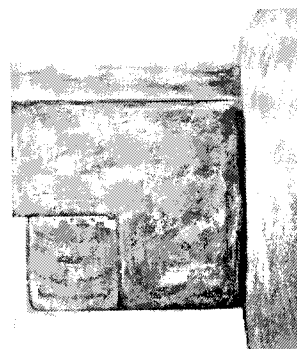

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

I wanted to paint the desert and had a particular desert scene in front of me, but my intent was not to depict *that* unique scene. (Notice, it could have been, but, in fact, wasn't.) My intent was to try to capture some of the abstract relations that the desert before me was exemplifying: the amazing sense of organic unity in which gravel can turn into sage can turn into barrel cactus, and sand can pick up the color of the sky, and saguaro cactus can act as a scene's frame—that's the real content—but I wanted the painting to *refer* to the desert. This is the func-

tion of the slightly realistic flowers on the barrel cactus, and the obvious shape of the right hand figure. They help to fix the reference, so that the painting can be seen as saying something abstract yet *about* the desert. But notice that I am claiming that reference is not fixed here as it is in portraiture. I reject the idea that this painting stands as an analogue to a definite description of the scene that was in front of me. But indefinite reference to a barrel cactus, a saguaro, some desert gravel, and so forth, seems undeniable.

This desert painting is a good example of *exemplarization*, as Lehrer (following Sellars) uses this term. Exemplarization is the use of the image of a particular object to make a more general point about a type or class of objects. In such a case, the various areas of the painting fix indefinite reference to types of objects. This is consistent with my intention to "say" something not about some particular cactus and patch of sky, but rather something more general about how these kinds of things can or do relate, visually. Reference here is not, as it is in portraiture, to particular objects, but rather to types or kinds of objects. It is an interesting element of interpretation of paintings to determine just where to "pitch" their reference. We must answer the question whether a painting refers to *this* cactus, *some* cactuses, *all* cactuses, things *shaped* like cactuses, all things cactuses can be thought to symbolize, and so forth. Reference varies.
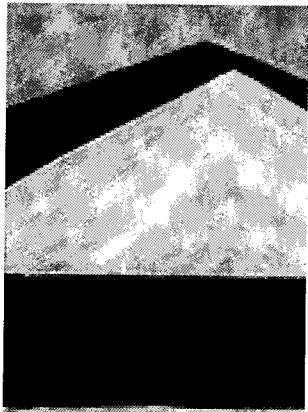
Reference in other paintings works differently. Some do not use images of particular objects to exemplarize a class, but refer to objects of certain sorts in an even more general fashion. Consider this painting, entitled "Nature, Clear, Austere" [Fig. 5]. Although this painting strikes me as a bit more realistic than the first, because, I think, the triangular shapes are so naturally read as mountains—more quickly than you read the barrel cactus, say—no particular mountain was used as the model or stimulus for this painting. This was painted abstractly with only my conception of "mountains" directing me. The reference here strikes me as even more general than in the desert painting, for I am not trying to refer to any type or class of mountain, or let the image of one thing stand as an exemplar for the kind. I intended that the painting exemplify how mountains can both bounce light off them, revealing texture, and how they paradoxically can sometimes seem to absorb light completely. This painting

Fig. 5

functions more like a general description such as, "mountains dramatically affect the skyline and generate visual depth and texture," and perhaps involves, in the logical sense, no existential claim at all.

Lehrer's thesis seems to be that artistic representation always involves exemplarization and generalization, and that a painting's intentional content (including its expressive content) is uncovered or interpreted through these processes. But I have worries here. Consider a completely abstract and formalist painting such as "Lines' Texture" [Fig. 6]. No object is being referred to here in order to say something abstract about it. This is, as we say, a "study" about line and texture, and if it refers to anything it refers to itself, or to its exhibited features. I had two goals here, one was simple: to use a different line or edge at each boundary to exhibit a contrast of lines. The second goal was to show that texture in painting can function as a form of line.

This painting exemplifies certain of its properties, in the neo-Goodmanian sense that it possesses those properties and it, or the artist, refers to them or calls attention to them, by their placement and organization on the canvas. For example, attention is drawn to the differences in the lines when one realizes that each and every one of them is painted in a different way, obviously intentionally. And the prominence of the black textural field stimulates the question what its connection is with the edges or lines. (See detail, Fig. 7.)

Fig. 6   *Fig. 7 (Detail)*

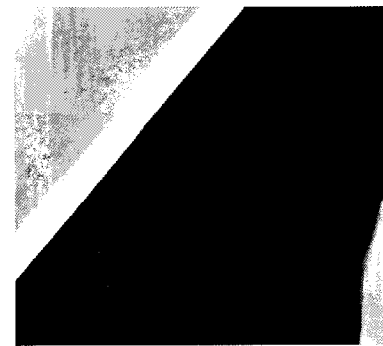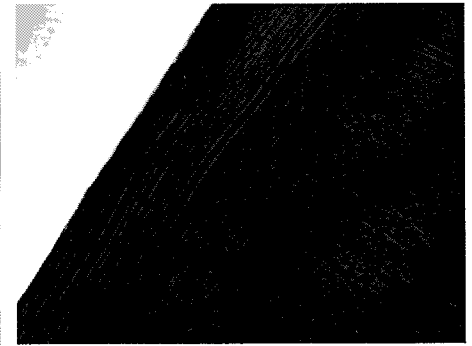So, exemplification, Goodman-style, yes: possession of and reference to the ragged line, the sharp line, and so forth. But exemplarization, Lehrer-style? I am not so sure. Although the work clearly has intentional content, I feel very little inclination to talk of generalization. I am just presenting a number of ways an edge can be drawn, and am associating texture with line. I don't think the paint-

ing is saying something about all lines, or the class of ragged lines, for example. Reference here is, I think, merely to the property *instances* exhibited in the painting. A study is, as the term implies, much into self-reference.

I find the idea that the representation of objects or objects' features can be used to fix reference with the purpose of making some abstract point, a very central and rich idea. But there is still yet another variation on reference that I wish to mention if only to emphasize artistic reference's *variety*. Just as one can use the name of something to *refer* to it without necessarily going on to *assert* anything definite about it, so I think that it is possible for abstract paintings sometimes to function more like a name (or names) than an assertion; the function is more *totemic* than assertive. (Think of how a totem pole might juxtapose symbols for, say, fertility, bounty, peace, war, and death.) Paintings can be emblematic, where the mere association or contrast of the various signs can have aesthetic impact even though a more definite "message" is questionable. Consider, e.g., etching the words of natural elements such as 'water', 'fire', and 'earth' on a polished plate of steel or aluminum. This may create aesthetic value even while any "statement" is left vague and ephemeral. One experiences contrast and it is impactful, but little more is "said".

Perhaps there is an element of this more totemic, denominative, and contrastive type of reference in a work such as this: "Nature in Brushed Aluminum" [Fig. 8]. We have, here, references to the sun, land, physical mass (the black), light (the yellow), the skyline, etc., but I think it is more difficult to identify some abstract assertion in this case than in, e.g., "Desert Diebenkorn." There is a *presentation* of symbols here, more than a *description*.

In sum, then, abstraction functions differently from depiction, but reference is important to both. But reference functions variedly, and there will be even more to say on this point as we continue.

Fig. 8

Exemplification: Reference to Properties

We have, so far, been concentrating on what can be thought of as various forms of *object*-reference in painting. Realistic depiction, as in portraiture, is one form of unique reference; a totemic symbol of the sun is another. Representing the flowers of a barrel cactus in order to say something interesting and abstract about the desert secures a more general reference via exemplarization. Making a visual point about mountains is more general still. In the case of "Lines' Texture," we saw that paintings can refer to their own property-instances, which, though not objects, are another kind of particular. We need to go further, though. By highlighting certain of their particular features, paintings can, I think, refer to properties considered as universals. They can say something about luminosity or texture, anguish or political oppression that goes beyond self-reference to their property-instances. Inferences generalizing from a work's property-instances to conclusions about those properties, per se, may well be what Lehrer really has in mind by "exemplarization," even though it is metaphysically debatable whether the relation between a property and its instances is the same as that between a class of things and an exemplar of that class (which is how he originally introduces the concept).

If exemplarization is a generalizing inference we make from the artwork's particular features to some conclusion about the work's "content" construed more interpretatively, then there may be nothing we wish to say here that cannot be stated in terms of Goodman's more familiar notion of *exemplification*. Indeed these two concepts may be equivalent. But since Goodman is quite explicit about how exemplification relates to expression, one of our main concerns, I prefer to rely on 'exemplification' for the rest of this paper.

With his famous example of a tailor's swatch, which *exemplifies* some of its properties, such as color and texture, but not size and shape, Goodman establishes that only some of a painting's properties are exemplified by the work. Others recede into a kind of conventional or categorical background: we take for granted that tailor's swatches are 2"x3" rectangles with pinked edges—these properties are not the properties of the finished garment, as the weight and color of the cloth are.(1968:86)

Exemplification of a property by a painting, then, requires more than the simple possession of that property by the work.[1] Just as the swatch calls attention to, or highlights, the fabric's color, weight, and texture, so a painting calls attention to compositional, textural, and color properties, but not to its actual weight or whether it has been stapled or nailed to its stretcher. Exemplification, then, is possession of a property plus reference back to it by the painting, as

Goodman says. But Goodman goes on to give his notoriously nominalistic canonical interpretation of exemplification in terms of *predicates* denoting the painting and the painting "referring back" to the predicate exemplified. I think we are far better off thinking of exemplification as a form of reference to, or artistic representation of, various properties. Hence, it is another form of reference, on par with artistic representation of *objects*. Goodman's nominalist interpretation not only forces us to speak implausibly about paintings referring back to predicates, but it also has the consequence that representation and exemplification (and therefore ultimately expression) cannot be seen as consonant semantic relations. Indeed, Goodman is committed to the claim that representation and exemplification are reference relations differing "in direction": representation is denotation of an *object* by the painting, while exemplification involves denotation of the *painting* by a predicate true of it. (1968:50-52)

Artworks exemplify properties and relations, and in so doing, can capture *aspects* of the world in abstract ways that go beyond realistic depiction of objects. So, exemplification is a form of reference that helps us understand how abstract paintings have content. Through exemplification, paintings refer to, or call attention to, features and relations that are of interest and value to us.

Let's have an example [Fig. 9]. This painting is, roughly, a painting of a number of fields over which much more active strokes have been applied. Because a vigorous paint stroke can capture and exemplify the action involved in its production, it creates a contrast to the more static background fields. The flicked-on skeins of paint have a similar effect, capturing the energy with which the paint originally met canvas. This energy of figure or stroke against the background fields is exemplified here. This painting is about how events, ac-

Fig. 9

tion, energy can enter and transform stable space. (An amusing sidebar to these points: this painting is a case where the viewer needs to be wary of reading too much into the painting's title, which is "Red Dog in the Road." I intended the painting to be completely abstract, but upon completion, I couldn't help but see in the red figure, eyes, snout, four legs, and tail. And the black and white vertical stripe can be read as a roadway. I simply gave in to these *accidental* similarities, and whimsically named the painting. Artist's intentions are worth knowing

about, to be sure. Diebenkorn's "Ocean Park #66", referred to earlier, is another case of a potentially misleading title. Because the painting seems to evoke water, sand, grass, and so forth, one might think the title describes the representational content of the painting. However, "Ocean Park" is simply where Diebenkorn was living at the time, and he painted many different paintings, of very distinct content, under the same rubric.)

In concluding this section, let me point out another continuity between the exemplification of properties and the pictorial representation of objects. We have already seen that object reference admits of greater and lesser generality. Portraits refer to unique objects, while other paintings might refer to saguaro cactuses or even more simply to mountains. Exemplification, likewise, I think, can proceed at different levels of generality. We saw unique reference to the painting's own property-instances in the case of "Lines' Texture." But, we surely also wish to say that paintings can refer to properties and relations generally and per se. They secure this reference by possessing and highlighting their own property-instances, surely, but properties also are ultimately exemplified. Going even further, it may be correct to say that a painting can *exemplify* not only visual properties, but other properties
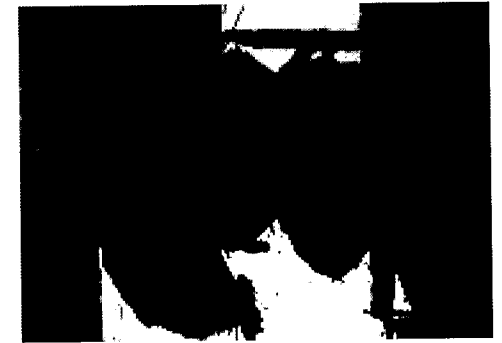
Fig. 10

that might be symbolized by those visual features. Motherwell's, "Elegy to the Spanish Republic No. 79" (Private Collection) [Fig. 10], exemplifies a squeezing pressure from outside forces, but in doing so it also can be said to exemplify oppressiveness, and it is from this exemplification that the painting gets its political character. Indeed I think this is not only an acceptable way of speaking about exemplification, but, as we shall see a bit later, it is the key to understanding expression. Expression is a form of exemplification.

Representation and Denotation

Fig. 11

Representation and exemplification are both forms of reference but are distinct relations. In that, Goodman is right. But the difference is not one of "direction" of the relation. It is a matter of what is being referred to. Objects are pictorially represented; properties and relations are exemplified. When a work exemplifies a saturated luminescent yellow such as in Van Gogh's "Still Life: 12 Sunflowers in a Vase," 1889 (Philadelphia Museum of Art) [Fig. 11], the work possesses that feature and refers to it. But notice that it doesn't *represent* the property. We represent one thing, an object, with another, a painting, e.g., and when it is, as in this case, *visual* representation, we do so *through* either exemplifying some of the visual properties the object literally possesses, or by exemplifying properties that are at least *metaphorically* true of the object. Hence, representation is not necessarily verisimilitude or depiction. In "Nature in Brushed Aluminum" [Fig. 8], the red square *represents* the sun, even though the sun is not square and only infrequently red (and never *this* red). Yet it is the sun that is referred to and not, say, the rising moon. Its position in the painting and its reddish color allow us to interpret the painting as fixing reference to the sun. The red square is a visual metaphor for the sun.

Representation is reference to objects, accomplished, in part, by exemplification of properties. So, is there any reason not to endorse Goodman's further claim that representation is a form of *denotation*? Denotation is perhaps best seen as a relation between a term, 'F', and an object, x, such that x is in the denotation of F, or 'F' denotes x, just in case 'is *an* (the) F' is true of x. Pictorial representation, on the other hand, occurs when the ascription, 'is a picture of x' is true of picture P. Being a representation is something true of the painting, while being denoted is something true of the object.

In *Ways of Worldmaking*, Goodman claims that a picture's being a "right rendering" on an object is, as it were, only a semiotically more generalized form of the relation, "is true of," the relation that predicates have to the objects they apply to.(1978:125-140) I am uneasy with the denotation relation on just these grounds. It commits us to a painting's being *true of* an object represented. But since there is no clear sense in which the painting is *predicated of* an object, it is dubious that the painting *denotes* the objects it represents. When an object x is in the extension of a predicate, P, then "is a P" is true of x. But when a painting, P, represents or refers to an object x, "is a P" is not true of x. Pictorial representation is not denotation.

If I am correct that exemplification of properties is a reference relation consonant with representation, then some corroboration that representation is not a *denotative* form of reference should be forthcoming from considering exemplification. And, indeed, this seems obvious. Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" exemplifies being luminously yellow, but it makes no sense to talk of this property being in the *denotation* of Van Gogh's painting, whatever, if anything, that could mean.

A picture P represents an object x when "is a picture of x" is true of P, not when P is somehow true of x. Now, when P is a picture of x, P refers to x. But P can refer to x without us having to say that x is in P's *denotation*. The exact conditions under which P represents x, or is a picture of x, are difficult to fully articulate, and I do not have a complete theory of representation. There appear to be causal, intentional, and conventional factors that all can play a role in fixing reference. But I do not think that the details of this story will bring along with them the idea that paintings denote, as linguistic predicates do.

Expression and Metaphor

We have seen that some abstract paintings refer or allude to worldly objects in order to say something abstract about them ("Desert Diebenkorn"). Others refer to objects in a more totemic fashion ("Nature in Brushed Aluminum"). Still others refer to no particular objects at all, but to properties and relations instantiated both in the abstract painting, as well as by various things in the world ("Elegy to the Spanish Republic", and "Red Dog in the Road").

Abstract paintings also frequently establish reference to things *expressive*, most obviously, to human emotions, moods, and feelings. This is what gives us *Abstract Expressionism*. I will be offering a view of abstract expressionism that is, in a sense, 180° from Goodman's theory of expression. As in the case of his theory of exemplification, I will be arguing here that Goodman has the facts of artistic expression importantly backwards.

Nevertheless, my position has pro-Goodman, as well as contra-Goodman aspects. Like Goodman, I think that expressiveness is more a matter of reference, metaphor, inference and cognition, than it is some kind of emotional reflex

response to a visual stimulus. Lehrer, on the other hand, has suggested that when a painting has emotional expressiveness, the sensory/perceptual states it generates, when exemplarized or interpreted under some general concept, can have an *encapsulated association* or relationship to an emotional state, thus explaining why we use the expressive vocabulary we so often do in describing and interpreting paintings.

I have no reason to deny that a frown makes us feel unpleasant in a rather hard-wired way, but I doubt that this has much application to the cognitively subtler inferences we draw when we interpret paintings as being emotionally expressive. I don't have to *consider* the frown to figure what it means, but most paintings have to be considered and interpreted if I am to appreciate their expressiveness. I am not against encapsulated reactions, but simply wish to emphasize that often quite abstract similarities are used as the basis for an inference from the sensory content of a work to its expressive content. This is often not only learned, rather than encapsulated, but learned endorse a more rationalist view of expression than Lehrer (showing his Scottish influence—Reid, Hume, and all) seems to be suggesting.

When a painting strikes us as expressive of some emotion, it has succeeded in referring—perhaps vaguely, perhaps ambiguously, but still successfully—to something in our emotional topology. But I find neither encapsulated response, nor Goodman's theory of expression acceptable.

Expression, for Goodman, is metaphorical exemplification, which means that the expressive painting is in the metaphorical extension of a certain predicate, e.g., 'is sad', or 'is lively'—'sad' or 'lively' being metaphorically true of the painting; plus there is a "reference back" to those predicates by the painting, since it "highlights" its sad or lively character. On this view, the emotional state referred to is (literally) the state of sadness, or has sadness as one of its actual properties, while the painting is the kind of thing that the predicate 'sad' is metaphorically true of. So, to speak sketchily, the metaphor runs from the emotion, or emotional person, to the painting, on this view. The painting is in the secondary, metaphorical denotation of the predicate, 'is sad', e.g.

I wish to suggest that artistic expression is, as Goodman says, a semantic or referential relation involving metaphor, but, in at least some cases, the painting's literal (or nearly literal) pictorial properties set up a metaphorical association to an emotional state, making the painting expressive of that state because its pictorial properties are *metaphorically true of that emotional state*. There is no reference by the painting back to predicates—Goodman is surely wrong about this—but more importantly, he may have the role of metaphor in artistic expression backwards. It is not that the painting is in the metaphorical denotation of a predicate

that names an expressive property; rather, it is that the painting exemplifies visual relations which we accept as metaphorically true of our emotional experiences. The metaphor runs *from* the painting to the emotion, not from the emotion's name to the painting.
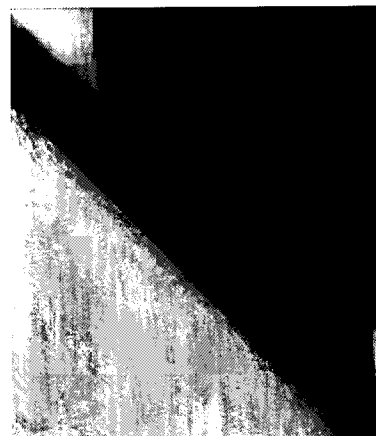

Fig. 12

Although compositionally similar to "Lines' Texture," which I see as formalist, this work, "Broken Order" [Fig. 12] is, or I hope it is, expressive. There is a palpable sense of mood here that "Lines' Texture" neither has nor was intended to have. Once you read "disturbance" in the lower portion of the painting, the starkness of the painting indicates that an emotional reference will be to a "dark" emotion, not to joy or innocent frivolity. (Notice already that we have used a description, "dark", that is literally true of the painting and only metaphorically true of certain emotions. Goodman's theory goes in the other direction: 'sad', e.g., is literally true of an emotion and metaphorically true of the sad painting.)

We say that pangs of despair, or regret, or panic, unease, or dread can cut razor-like into one's calm, can alter the texture of one's experience, can come in like a wave and blanket your current state, and so forth. Although I would not try to defend the idea that all of these descriptions are *literally* true of a painting, I do think that they are more immediately and pictorially true of a painting than they are of an emotion. The relevant emotions are metaphorically described in these ways, and therefore, paintings exemplifying such properties can be seen as referring to those emotions.
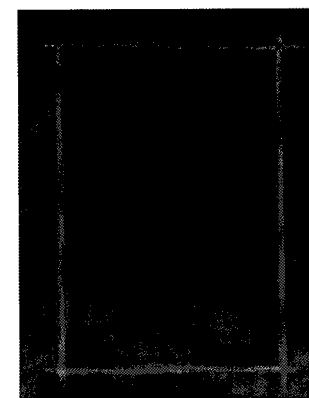
Hence, my idea is that a painting P is

Fig. 13

abstractly expressive of Φ when P literally exemplifies properties and relations that can be thought of as *metaphorically* applying to the emotion Φ, because of some similarity that obtains between the properties P exemplifies and the prop

erties that are characteristic of emotion Φ, or being in Φ, or being a Φ person. The painting, then, is a metaphor for the emotion. This is how reference gets established. The painting is said to be metaphorically Φ when it literally possesses properties that metaphorically apply to the emotion. The painting is not metaphorically "sad" as much as sadness is metaphorically drab, gray, and static. So, we have Goodman, but from 180°.

My final example makes no new point, but reinforces my claim that expression is a form of exemplification; that it is artistic reference to abstract properties and relations, pictorially represented, that can be thought of as similar to the properties of emotion, or metaphorically true of given emotions.

This painting, entitled, "Emotional Embers" [Fig. 13], exemplifies a dormant glow that might be a cooling down or sparking up. The brighter outside frame makes the middle area seem further back in the painting's depth, as if it is the residue of some event that once covered or encompassed the middle area. This reinforces the idea that what is expressed is the effect of some past incendiary event. Embers something transpired here and something is still going on. I would say that incendiary processes and properties are represented or alluded to rather literally here—at least more literally than these properties are true of emotional events we've all experienced. Yet we metaphorically describe such events in incendiary terms, and hence, can make the association between the exemplified properties of the painting and those emotional events. As a consequence, it strikes us as true that the painting expresses or refers to such emotions. Again, the painting has pictorial properties that are metaphorically true of the emotion. Metaphor runs from the symbol, the painting, to the natural object, the emotion, and the association is secured. This involves definite reference by the painting to certain properties that are metaphorically true of the emotion rather than to predicates metaphorically denoting the painting.

Conclusion

Reference is rampant in art, even at art's most abstract, for without reference, the artistic value and significance of painting would be restricted to mere visual sensuality. Sensuality is a wonderful thing, but there simply is more to the cognitive life of paintings. Various forms of reference secure this richer life and help to explain the representational and expressive power of painting. The varied forms of reference allow abstract painting entry into our cognitive and emotional life in ways that go beyond the purely reactive, and reach into our fullest nature as thinking, feeling, and perceptive humans. This is why theories of artistic rep-

resentation and expression are important, if perhaps not yet adequate, and why I have attempted here to advance those theories.[1]

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[1] *Languages of Art*, 52-55. In "Goodman's Theory of Representation, Exemplification and Expression," see *Proceedings of the Ohio Philosophical Association*, 1990, 94-110, I argue that exemplification does not always involve the literal possession of a property by an artwork; sometimes a work can exemplify a property by depicting an object that possesses that property, even though the property is not predicable of the work itself.

4

Expression and Communication:
A Socratic Theory of Inspiration

David Goldblatt

I

The early and "minor" Platonic dialogue *Ion* may well contain the first theory of artistic communication. In it, Socrates argues that the rhapsode Ion, a prize-winning performer of Homer, at least when he is performing, does not know what he is doing, or more generally that what he does is not a matter of knowing, nor of art or skill (*techné*). The explanation of why this performer mistakenly receives raves is not epistemological but rather, if you will, spiritual—a matter of inspiration rather than intellect. Socrates presents several related arguments in an attempt to show that Ion alone could not be the source of his own excellence, and by extension, neither could Homer, as poet, be the source of his. Socrates, as he does in other dialogues, presses an uncomfortable Ion to consider his own case—to undertake a self-examination of the work he brings into being, of the praxis at the very heart of his identity. Socrates frames a scenario where the artist's thinking about his own art is wrong, but not wrong about its merit.

The withholding of accolades from poet and performer, but not from his or her poems or performances requires a certain unique explanation. The explanation rests upon a causal theory of art in which Homer and Ion and Ion's audience are linked together in a process of linear communication. This Socratic theory, in which each artistic entity reflects similar emotions and ideas, has as its main causal constituent the outmoded or neglected concept of inspiration. Perhaps we should take a second look. I want to credit Plato's *Ion*, an otherwise extreme and excessive work, with allowing us to see that what is communicated in art through inspiration is not so much a feeling expressed as a circumstance for expression, a contingent opportunity whose potential is not always realized.

Although it is the best that inspiration can do for art, it is sometimes quite good enough.

Socrates hopes to explain to a resistant Ion, why he is so good, yet so undeserving. To this end, Socrates imagines a magnetized chain, a series of suspended iron rings empowered by a magnetic stone. In his simile, gods, poets, performers and then audience make up links intended as causal conduits for the emotions, but not the emotions alone, ultimately stretching from divinity to audience. As it is here applied to poetic performance, it is a theory in which specific aspects of art have an artistic effect upon other particular entities to act in certain art-related ways. The analogue for the simile's magnetic forces is inspiration. The Muse is a point of origin; a stone that attracts iron rings "but also imparts to them a similar power of attracting other rings."[1] The linking intermediaries connecting god and audience are Homer, the poet, and Ion. Ion believes, as we do, that the success he has with the throngs in his audience depends upon his expressing that which has been conveyed to him by the poet and by so doing, producing "similar effects on most spectators." (535) According to Alexander Nehamas the reaction of the audience at Greek dramas was often intense and "... the drama was considered a realistic representation of the world: we are told, for example, that a number of women were frightened into having miscarriages or into giving premature birth by the entrance of the Furies in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*."(1988: 223) But we would not call it "inspiration" unless something good was to come of it.

However, Socrates insists that Ion must perform out of his right mind (*ek-phren*) in order to join the chain of events, and only then would he become an intermediary between god and audience, allowing for the communication of the poet's work and through the poet, the Muse. If Ion is successful, as he always is with Homer, the audience will feel what it is supposed to, which apparently, is what the gods intended. In a sense, the Muse ventriloquizes Ion, who is like a medium uttering "that to which the Muse impels him, and that only." There is, Socrates says, "no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses...God takes away the minds of poets, and uses them as his ministers, as he also uses diviners and prophets, in order that we who hear them may know them to be speaking not of themselves who utter these priceless words in a state of unconsciousness, but that God himself is the speaker, and that through them he is conversing with us." (534) At least in the case of Muse to poet and poet to

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[1] Plato, *Ion*, in *The Dialogues of Plato*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, Random House 1937, Vol. 1. All subsequent notes from Plato's dialogues will be referenced parenthetically by section number from this book.

performer, it is a linguistic and emotional token that is communicated from divinity to Ion. Socrates portrays Ion as a bearer of emotions but alienates his responsibility in expression and precludes his role as originator of his art. His art is just passing through. Nevertheless, the story Socrates tells in this dialogue is a tale of art at its best—a doing well in every aspect of the creative process.

The simplistic ring simile, perhaps the first explanation of a non-technical theory of performance, can serve only as an outline for further discussion. However, it is deceivingly complex. With a certain speculation, using the rings as points of origin, I hope to fill in some candidates for details, which can be woven around this provisional narrative analogy. For all its faults, the *Ion* contains a dynamic theory of art, one in which no artistic individual acts alone. Furthermore, it allows for the possibility, that even when pushed, an artist may not herself be able to explain, may in fact, be quite uncertain, as to how she received the heart of the art she makes manifest and communicates to others or why her art is good. I suggest that it presents us with what a theory does best: it generates a number of art-related issues, here, having to do with the communication of the act of expression itself. However, the Ion barely mentions expression and I want to say that this neglect is no accident. In order to discredit Ion as an originating artist, it is imperative that Plato creates a tension between inspiration and expression, so that the former replaces the latter as an aesthetic component of Ion's performance. But, as said, this dialogue raises issues more problematic than at first meets the eye.

II

In the *Ion*, the art that is carried out and communicated, is done so by inspiration, a term seldom used in recent years to explain how anyone may get whatever art gives, those effects that are the gifts of engagement in an artworld. Socrates imagines that interpretation or understanding, a necessary but not sufficient condition for right performance, is passed on from the Muses "downward." "To understand him (Homer), and not merely learn his words by rote, is a thing greatly to be envied," (530) he tells Ion. And, as if to underline this point, Socrates connects interpretation with knowing and knowing with meaning or intending: "How can he (the rhapsode) interpret him well unless he knows what he means?" (530) But it is also clear from the dialogue that Socrates is concerned with emotion, when emotion is called for, and that emotion is analytic of rhapsodic inspiration. The point of inspiration is that it is active and activating—it moves us. Socrates gets Ion to say, "I must frankly confess that at the tale of pity my eyes are filled with tears, and when I speak of horrors, my hair stands on

end and my heart throbs." (535) Characterizing Plato's contemporary audience as less than passive, Nehamas says, "The expression of sorrow in the theater is superficially identical with—exactly the same in appearances—the expression of sorrow in life. Though actors do not, or need not, feel the sorrow they express on the stage, this underlying difference is necessarily imperceptible and allows the surface behavior of actors and real grievers to be exactly the same."(219) Of course, the performer would still need to know (somehow) what was called for in each individual case of sorrow and since the audience, too, is made up of individual bearers of sorrow, we can assume each felt the emotional power of the actor in his or her own way. However, as mentioned earlier, in the *Ion*, the performer and audience, as a matter of fact, feel the same sort of thing.

Ion believes his Homeric performance works because of the quality of his emotional expression during relevant episodes of his performance. However, the emotion he believes he is expressing is not something temporally prior to or conceptually independent of the expression. The expressiveness of his performance and the emotion he is expressing *are*, that is, come into being, at one and the same time. The properties *he* expresses just are properties of his *performance*, their confluence a contingent matter, but nonetheless a mark of Ion's excellence.

If we agree, against Plato, that Ion is expressing the emotional themes he sees fit, then we can see how the Socratic simile is at least consistent with Alan Tormey's claim about expression: "I would argue that statements attributing expressive (or physiognomic) properties to works of art should be construed as statements about the works themselves; and that the presence of expressive properties does not entail the occurrence of a prior *act* of expression."(1978: 351) In the account offered by Socrates, Ion's performance does depend upon some prior act, but not a prior act *by him* (which is what Tormey must mean here). Ion's successful performance will "magnetize" his audience by having "similar effects" upon it. Ion's spectators would know Homer but, unlike Socrates, would credit Ion for his magnificent work, as anyone would, which includes activating their own spirits to express their own feelings (as they apply to each unique life) regarding the subject matter of the Homeric tale.

Nelson Goodman, in his *Languages of Art*, analyzes expression in terms of exemplification and exemplification, he says, is a case of possession plus reference, something like a sample is an instance of what it is a sample of.(1968: 52-53) Typically, Goodman thinks of expression in terms of objects, art objects, rather than qualities or activities of animate beings. Ion possesses the emotion he is representing or displaying (Socrates says he is possessed) but since his performance does, Ion could have expressed the emotion he possesses even had he not. Ion just is the art object as well as executant or interpretive artist. Ion is

both the aesthetic object and animate being as the dancer may be the dance. Thus, while it is a matter of meaning, according to Goodman's criteria, that Ion's act expresses what Homer's songs call for, it only a contingent matter, though true, that Ion himself possesses the very qualities he is expressing. However, as we shall see, Socrates problematizes the claim that Ion expresses anything at all.

III

Arthur Danto, helpful as always, in his essay "Symbolic Expression and the Self," distinguishes between the mere manifestation of behavior and its expression. Behavior that is manifested, he says, requires only an explanation, not an interpretation. On the other hand, behavior that is expressed has reasons, not only causes—it has a point. Expression includes participation on the part of the expresser. Danto says, "To distinguish symbolic expressions from manifestations requires that we recognize how the former demands an interpretation, itself at the border of the kinds of interpretations works of art exact. Manifestation merely requires an explanation ... An individual whose behavior is manifestation is not making any point at all."(1992: 58-59)

In order to rid Ion of his just deserts, Socrates must make the claim that Ion is only manifesting the words and actions communicated to his audience. He must make the same claim for Homer. Socrates must have us think of Ion as a kind of thing, a being possessed by virtue of a kind of radical inspiration, a performer absent from his own performance, a non-participant merely manifesting Homeric verse. Socrates does his best to explain Ion's performance by putting inspiration in the place of expression and hence allowing Ion to manifest emotions without crediting him with expressing them. If Socrates' argument is sound, it also would have denied Ion his interpretive skills since mere manifestation, like the kind of "expression" of animal facial features emphasized by Charles Darwin in his *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, requires that one has not done his own thinking regarding the manifested behavior since one has done no thinking at all, in Ion's case, in his performance of Homer's epics. However, from the point of view of the unwitting spectator, as Nehamas suggested previously, Ion's manifested properties would be experienced no differently than if he were expressing them. It is a case, familiar to readers of Danto, where two things are visually indiscernible, but are ontologically different.

Danto's analysis offers another powerful, if more subtle idea. He says, "A symbolic expression implies a world in which instead is a manifestation. The

expression symbolizes the reality in which it would have been a manifestation, or a mere sign, if that world instead were real."(59) This helps us see how Socrates damages what Ion believes about himself. The world of magnetized rings is an artworld without participating artists, in which inspiration is imposed upon them in appropriate circumstances and over which they have no control. Its counter-world is an artworld, as Ion believes it to be, where Ion, having absorbed Homer, makes decisions to perform him as he sees fit. Homer, the theater, the presence of an audience become the occasion for expression. All that the talented Ion needs in this world is influence.

The theory Socrates presents makes it unclear as to whether the emotional features of Ion's performances are his own (those that become his as he is performing) as well as the ideas of poet and/or Muse or if they have nothing to do with him except that he is manifesting what belongs only to the poet and Muse. Or, further, since Socrates clearly distinguishes between Quotidian Ion and Possessed Ion, it seems Socrates could be read as saying that only Ion the Possessed manifests Homer's emotions and through Homer the emotions of the Muse. The somewhat theological claim that a Muse can inspire emotionally but also have emotions, not entirely out of line with Greek mythological thinking, is supported by the idea that the words of the Muse, communicated ultimately to Ion, must be said in a certain way for them to mean what they mean and among those things that constitute their meaning is their emotional content. In other words, the emotion purportedly expressed by Ion is never ontologically distinct from the meaning of his words and actions. But, to reiterate, since Ion the Possessed is extensionally identical with the performance, the properties expressed and then communicated to the festival crowd belong to the object of art as well as to Ion if they belong to Ion at all. In any case, inspiration can never be a matter of imitation or memorization alone, but, as Socrates has it, it can never be a matter of expression.

Nietzsche, in his reading of pre-Socratic tragedy and his speculation on the Dionysian festivals, says something very much like the Socratic pronouncement in the *Ion*. Each participant, through intoxication, loses his or her daily identities "in a mystical process of un-selving" and "to the extent that the subject is an artist he is already delivered from individual will and has become a medium through which the True Subject celebrates His redemption in illusion."(Nietzsche 1956: 39) For Nietzsche, here influenced by Schopenhauer, by the dropping of quotidian will the transfigured participant "is at once subject and object, poet, actor, and audience," (42) thus converging the Ionic rings into a single being. The performing Ion, by contrast with Nietzsche, must be something of a collage, just as many think of Homer as more than one piece, drawn

together under a single author-function, as Michel Foucault might say. (Foucault 1979: 148)

IV

It makes a difference for Socrates that each participant in the ring theory—Muse, Homer, Ion, and spectator—are potential bearers of emotion. The problem here is not the more contemporary one, whether an inanimate object such as a written-down poem or a painting possesses an aesthetic predicate either literal or metaphorical. Socrates' theory attempts to characterize *having* plus *communicating* by virtue of the efficaciousness of inspiration. However, Socrates attempts to objectify both Homer and Ion, removing from them responsibility and rationality at the same time as he denies them knowledge, by the out-of-their-mind/possession claims. It is not a pretty picture of the inspired artist, just as Plato in other dialogues, paints an ugly picture of the final ring, the audience, of which Nehamas says Plato thinks poetry perverts. (219) (Though Plato does not do much with the topic of the audience in the Ion, I will return briefly to it later on.) Still, Socrates sees the performing Ion only as a medium or conduit for the communication of emotion. Socrates' explanatory analogy has the performing Ion dislocated from the quotidian Ion. It is a point Socrates makes in the earlier *Apology* when he says, "I knew that not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but by a sort of genius and inspiration; they are like diviners or soothsayers who also say many fine things, but do not understand the meaning of them." (Plato, 22) This is because Ion must be out of his right mind in order to meet all the demands of performing the Homeric poems; among them knowing more than anyone could possibly know, including Homer. Socrates asks rhetorically of Ion if he knows what a slave would say, or a physician to a sick man, a cowherd to soothe infuriated cows, a spinning-woman about the working of wool. The situation here is something like directing a second-grade class in *Death of a Salesman*. How could second-graders know about the indifference of Free Enterprise, how popularity is fickle, how greed is inherited, and how it feels at the end of a lifetime of labor to not know who you really are? But suppose the results were a flawless performance. Some explanation of the second-graders success would seem warranted but it would not be one that banked heavily on the performers' correct interpretation of the play. (Ion is nearly pushed to absurdity saying initially, yes, he could just be a good general since he performs a general so well.) When faced with a successful second-grade performance of Miller's tragic play, I wouldn't know what to say.

V

While Socrates argues, that "not by art or knowledge about Homer do you say what you say, but by divine inspiration and by possession" the dialogue itself, the conversation between Socrates and his interlocutor counts against this claim. For minimally, Ion has made himself a candidate for possession by the Muse, indicating that the Muse did not choose blindly or otherwise at random when electrifying Ion. From the outset of the dialogue, Ion exhibits an intense interest in Homer and the very discussion of his status shows he can speak theoretically about his work in general and about particular incidents in the Homeric songs, of which he offers four examples. Furthermore, Socrates seems to substitute one form of interpretation for another: the ecstatic and dislocated interpretation of Homer while performing and the interpretation offered by Ion in the dialogue; the latter a seemingly sober account when Ion is not obliged "to wear fine clothes and to look as beautiful as (he) can." (285) In the end, Ion concedes to being merely blessed. Through his simile, Socrates hopes to lead Ion to something like the Bob Dylan line, "I can't help it if I'm lucky."

What we have, then, is Socrates trying to impose upon Ion what I would call a radical theory of inspiration, presupposing that inspiration *alone* is sufficient for generating his or her art. This rather simplified view of inspiration in which responsibility is precluded, is presented by the prolific Paul Valéry in a most damaging way. He says, "Suppose that some poem perfectly beautiful should come to you in a dream. Will you dare to claim it as yours? Under what name will you publish it? What is the name of this author? ... If it was a crime, you would reject it...Inspiration is then irresponsibility." Or again: "Supposing that inspiration was what people think it is—which is absurd, and which implies that a whole poem can be dictated to its author by some deity—this would result rather precisely in the fact that an inspired person could write just as well in a language other than his own and which he did not know."(Valéry 1968: 91) Valéry must have had the Ion in mind here.

Valéry, of course, is supposing that this account of inspiration, say "radical inspiration," where the recipient is unconscious and contributes nothing, as Socrates presumes, and the work comes to the artist as a finished product and that it is the content of art that infiltrates the artist by forces not in his control, is wrong. Since words are constituents of dreams as much as images, poems are a good example of a work that can arrive in a dream, and if remembered, can be merely appropriated by the artist. But, as Valéry is aware, nothing happens in art without the likes of education, work, practice or deliberation, even if nothing happens without inspiration.

However, Valéry also offers a revised account of radical inspiration in which what is communicated in poetry by the poet to the spectator is not merely content, certainly not precise content, but stimulation, motivation, the challenge to go on, the will to create and to this Valéry seems to approve. Perhaps it is obvious that a poem can be inspirational and that the inspired one may, among the many possible things she can be inspired to do, does art. This is how inspiration works in the Ion despite the extreme claim of strong inspiration. Here Valéry says: "A poem is really a kind of machine for producing the poetic state of mind by means of words. The effect of this machine is uncertain, for nothing is certain about action on other minds ... In a few minutes the reader will receive his shock from discoveries, connections, glimmers of expression that have been accumulated during months of research, waiting, patience and impatience. He may attribute much more to inspiration than it can give." (1958: 79) Richard Wollheim cites with approval, I think, one of the slogans from Valery's "Relexions sur l'Art": "A creator is one who makes others create." Wollheim says, "Valéry argued that we should regard works of art as constituting 'a new and impenetrable element' which is interposed between the artist and spectator." (1968: 75-76) A work instigates an occasion, an occasion a work. What is important is not the feeling of emotion as such, but rather that whomever is part of the Socratic linkage is touched by art and in a way that he or she becomes a creator—an interpretive artist in his or her own. But we may also want to add, that anything can inspire anyone.

Ion's blessings do not preclude artistic activity that he alone can intend—in his memorization, his attempts at understanding Homer, his theoretical involvement (although Socrates tries to show him to be mistaken), and his onstage initiative prior to his "possession." Socrates wants Ion to agree, as finally he does, that inspiration is both necessary and sufficient for Ion's superior achievements. But he may have come closer to showing only that without inspiration, the communication of emotion is likely to fail and that at any point in the artistic chain inspiration is both cause and effect.

VI

Plato's motives in the Ion may include driving a wedge between rhetoric and philosophy, intuition and reason, the unconscious and the deliberate as well as art as we know it and knowledge. The contrast between the unchanging object of knowledge and the energized aspects of art are clearly divided. Typically, a Platonic dialogue utilizes ideas already in the Athenian air, placing tradition under a

kind of scrutiny, but also in some places, provisionally accepting a traditional notion to see what claims it entails and what further issues it may generate. I would not want to rule out the possibility that Plato did not intend that the ring simile was anything but a strategy for Ion to come to terms with his own art. Since the simile of the magnetic rings begins with the Muse communicating with the poet Homer, we might do well to recall the opening lines of Homer's *Odyssey*:

> "*Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story of that man skilled in all ways of contending*,the wanderer, harried for years on end, after he plundered the stronghold on the proud height of Troy." (1961: 1)

The Greeks recognized a plurality of Muses and by doing so acknowledged that inspiration need not come from a single source and that those sources were external. In secularizing the Muse or other divinity as a source of unexplained and original inspiration, we might now say that inspiration can come from anywhere so that in the rewriting of Socrates' simile we might be open to beginning with any place, person, thing or event—a remark or a revolution would do just as well to set off what the Greeks thought of as memory in articulating what comes to be expressed in a work of art. But what is specifically expressed in art, need not be caused by the same type of thing inspiring it. The extremity of the Socratic simile implies that what Ion thinks of as his own artistic expression is actually the communication tokens. (Even Hegel, in his discussion of inspiration, offers champagne a role, if only a small one.) (1975: 36) However, for inspiration to be efficacious, it must make itself result in expression on the part of the individual it inspires—"Sing *in me*, Muse." Inspiration takes an object; it must inspire someone to do something.

If it appears difficult to accept a poetic archetype, an aesthetic unmoved mover, as a mysterious solution to unexplained instantiations of artistic expression in individuals, it is easy to imagine artists inspiring other artists. The *Ion* reflects an artistic process that is absorbed by those in its path, breathing in (as etymology does some work here) and then exhaling in its own form something, weakly or strongly, related to the inspiring cause. It would simply be false to insist a priori that a source of inspiration, even when animate, possesses those very same properties it inspires in others, although in the *Ion* something like that occurs at least between Ion and his spectators. But that something amazing happens, or should in art, allowing for the expression of emotion is an analysis with which it is easier to agree and from which various theories may begin to emerge. If Socrates intends that art has a degree of improvisational luck, if not magic, that is all to his credit. And when we switch from imagining what art does to

what it ought to do, the inspiration of expression would surely show up high on a theoretical list.

VII

It may be of some interest here that the magnetic linkage ends with the audience. It is only later, in the *Republic*, where Plato tends to the effects on the festival crowds as an analogue to an objectionable part of the soul. It is where ethics and aesthetics come together in a political and communal sphere. Politics depends on numbers. However, it would be easy to see how continuing the magnetic communication with what happens when the audience leaves the theater, can complicate this simile. Here the links may be shifted to a rhizome-like model, each member of the audience beginning a new linear annex, each going their own way, taking their emotional inheritance to absent children and friends, co-workers and strangers—to society at large. It is a well known worry of Socrates in the *Republic* that the didactic features of art, conditioned and bolstered by the power of the emotions, may cause a kind of trouble through ignorance, bypassing rationality entirely. In the *Ion*, Socrates, doesn't go there. But he could have.

Jacques Derrida has made much of the absence/presence distinction in the *Phaedrus*. Plato, as Derrida has so emphasized, in privileging presence over absence, devalues writing in the *Phaedrus*. (1981: 77-80) In that dialogue, Socrates argues that in the absence of the writer, the written word my fall into the wrong hands, be misconstrued, misunderstood, misinterpreted, without the writer present to defend him/herself. In the absence of the writer the option of the reader getting a wrong reading corrected is precluded. However, one is always present to one's speech. A failure of communication worries Socrates. Plato may have wanted a simile of touching rings, not simply as a matter of physics, but as a being-in-the-presence-of. So, across the gulf of a millennium, Socrates says that in doing Homer theatrically, Ion puts himself "in the company of poets" as the spectator is in the company of Ion. And at the time Ion has "the greatest effect upon the audience" Socrates notes, "Are you not carried out of yourself, and does not your soul in an ecstacy seem to be among the persons or places of which you are speaking, whether they are in Ithaca or in Troy or whatever may be the scene of the poem?" (535) The Muse, then, although she cannot respond to the words she embeds in Ion, inspires by being in him to set him up for his performances. Still, an unconscious, possessed Ion may be as absent from his audience as any star on the silver screen. For if Socrates is right, while Ion is performing he may be in the least best position to know whether he has communicated with his audience.

VIII

Although Socrates devalues the intellectual aspects of Ion's art, he depicts it as a dynamic process, something passing between those making up his iron rings. Knowledge, on the other hand, the objects of knowledge for Plato, are characteristically static. What happens in the Ion is something that happens *between* artistic entities. In reciting a passage from Homer, Ion is constructing a passage, a route, from himself to his audience. Understood dynamically—art *moves* those involved to express their own feelings about something outside of themselves, something public and common: how it feels to race a chariot, how Odysseus felt at his homecoming and the like, without necessarily having raced a chariot, had a homecoming or, for that matter, having *been* Odysseus. Ion may express, at certain times during his performance, what Homer felt, which if he felt anything at all, would be akin to what Penelope, Homer's character, would feel if she were only a historical figure. In any case, Socrates pulls away from the apparent tautology that one can express only one's own (internal and private) emotions and calls our attention to the artistic task of communicating by expressing the thoughts and feelings of others. (That Denzel Washington, to choose just one example, worked for nearly a year to prepare for the film role of Malcolm, would count against Socrates' proposal, if Washington, after all that time, could not speak well on, say, Eleanor Roosevelt.)

The magnetic theory is not mesmerized by an internal/external theory of expression, but rather turns to a philosophical problem at least equally familiar, but one by no means an obstacle to art: the artist expressing what others feel or think, and not only for a mille-second of feeling. Ion's task, for example, might be to express an enduring emotion lasting, as homesickness would in the *Iliad*, many years. What we generally think of artistic expression is often a matter of construction imposed upon some self, ourselves or others from the outside; one that retroactively appears to fit some pre-established way of thinking or feeling, fictional or not. Nietzsche says, "When we are awake, we also do what we do in our dreams. We invent and make up the person with whom we associate—and immediately forget it." (1966: 88) What I mean here is that instances of those who express the emotions of others in their work—novelists, directors and rhapsodes (as Socrates impresses upon Ion)—are too plentiful to ignore for any theory of emotion. The skeptic would then transfer difficulties for a coherent theory of the communication of expression from private language issues to the problem of other minds.

In Garry Hagberg's excellent *Art as Language*, he outlines a paradox of expression that he believes is resolved by appealing to Wittgenstein's arguments

against the logical possibility of a privately denoting language—a language that could not possibly be learned by others and therefore could not possibly be taught. Wittgenstein's anti-solipsistic argument recognized the logical publicity of language and hence any aspect of art considered intimate to language.[2]

Although the Socratic theory may fail in other ways, Socrates tacitly skirts the private language issue by imagining that Ion's emotions just are the emotions of others—intrinsically sharable and ultimately public. What art can do, it seems, is not to impose the thought and feelings of artworks on spectators and other interpreters, but to offer us the proper occasions for constructing our own. When the two coincide is it is neither better nor worse.

These are larger and other issues. But we can agree, as I do with Hagberg, and still recognize the task of artistic expression as the job of constructing the feelings and emotions of others, communicated in a public sphere, and evidenced by artworks themselves; works like the rhapsodic performances of Ion or the poems of Homer.

IX

Socrates counts it as an important point that Ion can speak well only of Homer and not nearly as well about other poets. "If you were able to speak of him by rules of art, you would have been able to speak of all other poets; for poetry is a whole." (532) The ring simile is presented as an alternative to the technical theory of art in which art is formulaic and a successful performance can be enacted by following rules to the letter. One way of expressing what a *techné* is, is to appeal to rule-governed behavior directed at a specific *telos* or end—an activity with a more or less specific set of ways to get there and in which we know the outcome in advance if we are successful. Socrates makes it clear that Ion is not speaking by "rules of art" since following such rules to the letter would be to

master a general technique. The idea that Ion is not working by rules indicates that he is not a technician. And this must remind us of Hegel and Kant's (later R. G. Collingwood's) dismissal of rule following for genius—the giving rather than accepting the rule for art. But, it should be said, the rejection of a technical theory of art is no difficulty for Ion, even if Ion has no general theory of his own. His place as interlocutor is to defend himself against the view that he contributes nothing to his art because he is not expressing anything.

X

I would like to think that Socrates, in his attempt to demean Ion, is nonetheless making a point important in contemporary art: that no one creates alone—that it is a logical point about artistic activity that others must be involved, that no one except daughters of gods perhaps, can be a point of absolute origin. In his attempt at vitiating the kudos from Ion, Socrates may be inadvertently emphasizing the communal and communicative nature of artistic creation and hence, how communication with past artistic entities, the most intimate aspect of the ring simile, is a necessary condition for art. To the extent that the *Ion* shows us something about communication, it is about the communication for the occasion of expression and when successful, expression creates expression, art creates art. In today's world, embodied spirit may have been replaced by embodied meaning, but inspiration may be as much a gift for some as the hard work of art may be for others.[3]

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[2] In Garry Hagberg, *Art as Language*, 119-120. Hagberg puts the paradox this way:

"1. Emotions are private, phenomenologically internal objects that are located beyond the reach of others; they are not a part of the public, observable world to which others have access. They are, in a sense, secrets inviolably kept by ontology.

2. Artworks are physical objects (albeit of a curious sort), objects located in the public, observable, world. Their existence, we might say, is physical rather than phenomenological, and their existence does not depend—unlike emotions—on the mind that perceives them.

3. Artistic expression is nothing short of the apparently impossible process of merging (1) and (2). Expressive artworks cannot, as ontological impossibilities, exist—and yet they most assuredly, as the empirical fact of the case, do exist."

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[3] R. G. Collingwood, whose name can hardly escape an essay on expression, does not mention Socrates or Ion, nor does he connect Plato with an unattributed theory of inspiration and of which he says, "... the artist's activity is controlled by some divine or at least spiritual being that uses him as a mouthpiece, is out of fashion to-day, but that is no reason why we should refuse it a hearing. It does at least fit the facts better than most of the theories of art nowadays current." Then, Collingwood says, it would be "a waste of time to criticize" this theory. *The Principles of Art*, Oxford 1974, 126-127.

5
Expression in Literature

V. K. Chari

Expression in literature is an inseparable part of our general discourse about expression as a human activity and as a general theory of the arts, and so cannot be treated in isolation. But before any meaningful discussion can take place, one has to deal with the vagaries of the term itself, its semantics and its logical implications. Alan Tormey and Guy Sircello have brought immense clarification to the concept of expression and I shall draw upon their work and comment on it in some detail. But in discussing the topic of this chapter, I shall argue that what is termed "expression" is determined by the nature of its formal medium and that expression in literature, as in the theater arts, portrait painting and sculpture, is quite distinct from and relatively more straightforward and less problematic than in music, abstract art, architecture, and abstract dance. General theories of art often proceed by applying single paradigms to all forms of art and discussions of expression in art too tend to make music the litmus for the application of "expression" terms to works of art. But it would be a mistake to generalize from the single case of music to all art forms.

This chapter is accordingly divided into three parts: I. The Logic of Expression; II. Expression in Art; III. Expression in Literature.

I. The Logic of Expression

Since the word "expression" has been so notoriously ambiguous, the most reliable way of fixing its meaning would be to trace it back to its etymology—a method employed by linguists traditionally since the Indian etymologist Yāska (c. sixth century B.C.). Some who follow the use theory of language may argue, however, that the origins of a term need not be confused with the conditions of its valid use. But even for ascertaining the correctness of a given use of a term, one should match it against a norm, which is its "core meaning" fixed by ety-

mology, as opposed to its extended or metaphorical applications. Usage alone cannot justify a particular use of a lexical item. One source of confusion in our talk about expression in art, as pointed out by Sircello and others, has been the carelessness or imprecision of its use, as meaning "representing," "portraying," "depicting," "conveying," "revealing," "signifying," "describing," and so forth. Hence it seems best to distinguish that term from the family of "expression" terms by fixing it in its original etymological sense, to see in what ways it can be justifiably employed in our discourse about art. This procedure may be arbitrary and restrictive, but there doesn't seem to be a satisfactory alternative to it. We must, at any cost, agree upon some sense of the word that we are using before we can have an intelligible conversation in terms of it.

The Latin derivation of the term "express": expressere, meaning "press out," would carry the following implications:

(i) that "expressing" is an act (a performance, if you will),
(ii) in which there is something "inner" that is being pressed out,
(iii) that this pressing out takes an agent
(iv) who consciously or intentionally engages in that act,
(v) by some means or through a medium that is distinct from and external to the thing to be pressed out.

To put it more succinctly, expression is a conscious or intentional act which requires that there be an expressing agent, an expresser or expressive medium, and an expressed "meaning" (object, thought, feeling, belief, attitude or mental disposition of any kind: artha, bhava, in Sanskrit). Expression is "object-directed," and contains a reference to something outside of itself. As Tormey points out: "Thus an expression points simultaneously in two directions—back toward the person and outward toward the object. It is characteristic of expression to make implicit allusion to both these features of the total situation." (28) This further implies that the expressed meaning is something mental or internal and the expressive media something external or sensory (transmitted through the visual or auditory senses). Thus the main vehicles or mediums of expression are words, and bodily gestures or action movements—which are a form of voluntary action and so may be supposed to carry an intent to "express" a meaning.

Although, strictly, expression (expressing) is what can be performed by a living being, sometimes we speak of the expressive medium itself as performing that act: as when we say that a painting or a gesture "expresses" sadness, or that a word "expresses" a meaning, and so on, thereby transferring the expressive power from the agent to the medium, since what really accomplishes the act of

expressing and what "speaks" to us is the medium. Hence we call the dramatic act, the art object, the spoken or written word, or any other form of expression "expressive," meaning "effectively conveying thought or feeling" (O.E.D.). The medium itself thus becomes the expresser. In what follows, I shall therefore be characterizing the relation between the "expressive" object or medium or vehicle of expression and the expressed meaning as the "expresser-expressed" relation, and referring to the expressing agent simply by that designation.

The expressed meaning, as I have said, is a mental object—image, thought, or feeling—which, unless the expressing agent chooses to express through a medium, will not become manifest to an outsider to that object. It is for this reason, then, that the medium may be said to be the accomplisher of the expressing act or the virtual expresser. It is both the material and efficient cause of the expressive act. Some may even go so far as to say that it is in and through the act of expression that the thought or feeling is intuited or that it takes form, and that without the expression thought itself is non-existent or that it must remain inchoate (cf. Collingwood-Croce theory of intuition). The Indian grammarian Bhartṛhari maintained that there is no thought without some sort of verbalizing. But it is not important for purposes of critical discourse to settle this question, although experience tells us that there is a pre-linguistic phase in which "gut-feelings" are felt and known without having to be articulated in any way. At any rate, what creates a cognitive situation is the accomplished act of expression and this is accomplished by the medium. In terms of artistic creation, the end product, namely, the created art work, which served as the medium of the expressed act, takes on an autonomous, self-revealing character. This is not to say, however, that the medium is a self-referring entity and an end in itself, for by its very nature it should lead to the knowledge of the meaning, which it is its function only to mediate, not to constitute. Thus the medium can never be the message itself. Rather, like a messenger, it delivers the message.

Although, viewed from the point of view of the expressing agent, expression is a subjective event or act, from the point of view of an outsider to that event it is an objective, cognitive situation and the performed act is a manifested object, an expressive, meaning-bearing sign revealing the expressed intent. However, an expressive sign must be distinguished from an inferential sign (linga in Sanskrit) per se, where that sign does not carry the implication of an intentional act: e.g., smoke as the sign of fire or shivering as a symptom of malaria. Such signs of natural happenings have no intentional objects and cannot be considered intentional acts. However, behavioral acts of humans as well as of the beings of the animal world (e.g., movements and gestures of a frightened animal or bird) serve as indicative signs of inner states which, in turn, have intentional objects or ob-

jects on which feelings are directed. Involuntary reactions, like shrieks of horror and sad smiles are not intentional acts. But they are nonetheless intentional since they result from objects intended as objects of their respective emotions. From such signs we can draw inferences as to intentional states, given the inference warranting circumstances. Judged by this criterion, only behavioral expressions and other actions resulting from design, and linguistic acts can qualify for the designation of expressive acts and signs or bearers of an inner meaning/intention.

The verbal sign, as a vehicle of expression, does not of course by itself—as a grammatical paradigm, that is—carry intentional implications or involve any form of inference. It carries its meaning on its face as it is fixed in its meaning by convention. But when it is used in performing speech acts (illocutionary acts), it becomes an expressive act revealing the intended meaning of the speaker. One interprets from the utterance and the context in which the utterance is made to the attitude, mood, purpose, etc. of the speaker. The mere utterance of a proposition does not, however, constitute an expressive act as it provides no warrant for a legitimate inference about its being an expression without a proper context, linguistic as well as non-linguistic or situational (gestures, tone of voice, etc.). All this is summed up by Tormey when he says: "Intentionality and certain forms of inferential connection are criterial conditions for the correct use of 'expression'" (60).

Sircello does not directly touch upon the intentionality and inferential aspect of expression. But his theory of "artistic acts," his emphasis on the subject-based, internal character of expression, and the analogy he draws between expression in art and natural and behavioral expression (gestures, etc.) do imply both the intentional and inferential nature of the expressive activity.

But intentionality and inferability alone cannot define or delimit the scope of expression in the sense in which it is relevant to our discussion, since they are together characteristic of all behavioral acts and of all uses of language. Nor does the idea of externalizing something that is internal, which expression involves, define artistic expression since every form of human behavior or action, including linguistic acts, seek to do the same. All liguistic acts (locutionary acts) carry the intent to express an intentended meaning and also to perform particular types of illocutionary acts, like stating, asserting, describing, commending, promising, and so on. The liguistic sign itself signifies or names a concept or a mental image, rather than a thing in the objective world. Hence most writers on the subject assume that when we talk about artistic expression we usually mean expression of feelings, attitudes, and so on, and not intentions or ideas of all kinds. Sircello states explicitly that he is laying heavy emphasis on expression of

the emotions, "since it is emotions which are most characteristically expressed" (14), although of course anthropomorphic attributes, which he mainly deals with, are not all necessarily of the feeling type. Tormey too defines the intentional state in terms of emotions and attitudes. One should distinguish the mere utterance of a proposition from the "propositional attitude"—the attitude or feeling with which a proposition is uttered" (Tormey, 80; Ogden & Richards, 224-25). To qualify as expression a linguistic utterance must carry inferential implications about the intentional state of the speaker, which are often provided by the linguistic context of the utterance as well as by non-linguistic (gestures, movements) and non-semantic (tone of voice, intonation contour) features of the speech situation. Accordingly, then, the nonpropositional or sentimental elements differentiate expression from other sorts of linguistic acts.

By the same token, nonverbal, behavioral expressions too must be judged by reference to their putative intentional states. A simple behavioral movement like walking in the garden or eating one's supper carries no implications as to the state of mind of the doer, unless it is described in a way that is indicative of his attitude toward the action he is performing. Here, once again, it is the situational context that can reveal any such inferential linkage. Sincerity or seriousness of intent on the part of the agent cannot serve as a test of the truth value of an expressive act. For they themselves have to be ascertained criterially, by reference to the situational data, not by peering into the mind of the agent.

In what follows, I will then adopt the view that feelings, attitudes, and so forth, which belong to the "emotive," as opposed to the "cognitive," nature of man, are the proper objects of expression. The cognitive status of their expression, presentation, or representation itself is indisputable as, for one thing, emotions always have cognitive objects and cannot be manifested without them, and for another, their expression in behavior or language is always through an objective medium and is available for scrutiny as a meaning expressed, if not simply as a feeling felt. So this account ought not to attract the objection of private language or expressionist fallacy. I shall not enter into a discussion of whether emotive meaning alone is to be accepted as the proper subject or a necessary condition of art in general or of literature in particular.[1]

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[1] For a discussion of literature and the emotions See V.K. Chari, *Sanskrit Criticism*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990, chaps. 2, 3, 4, and 10.

II. Expression in Art

I have so far argued that the most viable way of understanding "expression" is by way of its original etymological sense, with its attendant logical implications. If this sense of the term is accepted and expression is taken as an act, then, the question that has to be answered with regard to the application of the term to works of art is: Who is the agent that expresses?

i.a. The artist, in his own person, expressing ideas and feelings personal to himself, in an act of self-expression?

i.b. Or, the mind of the artist exerting intentional control over his handiwork, like an "invisible hand" or shaping agency, and speaking to us through his work?

i.c. Or, the artist's persona or speaking voice heard or somehow discernible in the work as a felt presence?

i.d. Or, the depicted character/speaker expressing himself through word, or through behavioral gesture and action, as in acting and dance?

I will defend the alternatives in i.c and i.d. in arguing against those in i.a. and i.b.

ii. If, on the other hand, we do not wish to assume an agent or a prior act of expression and wish to deal with the work of art in purely objective terms, especially where there are no persons or other living beings present who can engage in that act or who can be credited with the faculty of expressing (e.g., music, architecture, paintings of landscapes and other objects), then, we would have to regard the art object itself as invested with the power of expression. And this may be done in three ways:

a. in virtue of certain qualities ("expressive qualities") which the object possesses and which may be called expressive on the analogy of the expressiveness of human behavior—that is to say, in virtue of the properties which the artwork shares with expressive behavior, or in other words, by applying anthropomorphic attributes to the artwork: e.g., "The music is sad."

b. or, on the ground that the artwork is a sign having a referential relation to things—ideas and feelings—that it stands for, in other words, that it is a semiotic sign; or on the ground that it is an iconic sign of what it signifies, that it is similar in some structural, visual, auditory, or kinetic aspects to the inner processes or events of the mind;

c. or, in virtue of the disposition of the artwork to arouse certain responses in the beholder, on the supposition that what the work arouses it will also posseess and express.

All the three ways are object-based and dispense with the necessity of positing an active expressing agent and a prior act of expression. Therefore I shall deal with them together under the head "Object-Quality Approach."

i.a. The Artist as the Expressing Agent

Literally, to regard an artwork as an act of expression is to say that the artist is in a most obvious way the performer, agent of whatever he creates in the act of expressing something. But the theory of expression, originating in the Romantic conception of art and the artist, claims much more: It claims that art is the expression of the artist's own mind—his feelings and thoughts—and further, in the way the theory developed at the hands of Croce and Collingwood, that it is in the process of creating that the artist intuits or discovers his feelings. Expression, then, is this process or act taking place in the mind of the artist, and the created work no more than a pale image of it. The ramifications and tenability of this theory have been discussed threadbare by critics and rejected on the ground that, since our concern is with the product rather than with the process, any investigation of the intuition-expression process is strictly irrelevant to our understanding and judgement of the art work (Sparshott, 312-14; Hospers).

i.b. The Mind in Art

An alternative to locating the act of expression in the artist's mind is to show that it characterizes the artwork itself as an "artistic act," in which the artist's mind can be seen to be an operating factor that has to be assumed in order to justify attributions of anthropomorphic predicates to artworks. This modified theory of expression is advanced by Sircello who maintains that the expressive character of art "is not simply a question of certain 'properties' being applicable to a set of objects" (130). According to him, there are two ways in which the mind of the artist can be seen to be directly and perceptibly influencing his work and the way it is characterized: One is through what he calls the "artistic act" and the other, "subjective factors" which are not artistic acts, but which are as integrally related to the work. Artistic acts are what the artist "does" in the work, the way he portrays his characters, treats his subject, the point of view from which he presents his material, and so on. They have nothing to do with the author as a person or his psychological processes, and they are not "identifiable or describable independently of the works 'in' which they are done." Descriptions of them "are at once and necessarily descriptions of art works." Yet, Sircello maintains that they are not object properties of the works and describable only as such, but "truly acts of the artists and something which the arists

have done" (29) and which justifies our calling art "expressive." Sircello's argument is directed against the "object-property" theory held by Bouwsma and Beardsley, according to which anthropomorphic predicates like "melancholy," "joyous," and "nostalgic" are applicable to artworks in virtue of their having such properties, and so the so-called expressiveness of art is translatable into terms descriptive of the art object itself. This, in effect, eliminates the necessity for a concept of art as expression. Sircello's main thrust is to show that at least some anthropomorphic attributions to artworks are justifiable on the model of "agent and act" rather than on the "thing-property" model offered by Beardsley and Bouwsma. However, Sircello points out that artworks can be expressive in two other alternative ways, too, in which expressive or anthropomorphic qualities can be ascribed to them directly, rather than by way of the artistic acts: A work may be called expressive (i) in virtue of its depicted subject matter, in which persons are represented as expressing emotions, and the like; and (ii) in virtue of its formal properties which it could share with objects in nature. But these ways too would, according to him, ultimately be traceable to the mind of the artist.

Artistic Acts

Sircello is right in arguing that artistic expression, indeed all expression for that matter, must be an act of the mind and that it involves reference to an agent/speaker and to something "inner." In this broad sense, no doubt, all art creation, all manner of composing or human handiwork may be called an artistic act. But Sircello's argument is that, more specifically, at least some descriptions of artworks necessarily require that they be construed as artistic acts, since otherwise they would be incorrect or false descriptions, and that in some cases, although they may apply to artworks, they are also translatable into descriptions of artistic acts or they are ultimately traceable to artistic acts. Jenefer Robinson has argued that the expressiveness of artworks can, in most cases, be explained in terms either of their subject matter or of formal features that they share with natural objects and scenes, and that artistic acts can be eliminated from most critical discourse. While I agree with part of Robinson's argument, I should maintain that, in the sense defined above, expressiveness can be ascribed only to cases where there is an expressing agent and that ascriptions of expressiveness to the formal features of a work is an illegitimate ascription except as a metaphoric usage. Neither colors, lines, sound sequences, and so forth, nor objects and scenes of the natural world (unless they are scenes of human action) can be expressive by themselves or possess expressive properties; they do not involve an agent or an expresser-expressed relation. Moreover, the eliminability of artistic

acts should be justified on weightier grounds than by showing that characterizations of artworks as artistic acts are also construable in alternative ways to accord with the object-property model. There is, for instance, the consideration of the necessity or the admissibility even of invoking the act of the artist. I shall discuss below a few representative examples analyzed by Sircello:

a. Raphael's Madonna La Belle Jardinière is calm and serene.
b. Poussin's The Rape of the Sabine Women is calm and aloof.
c. Breughel's Wedding Dance in the Open Air is gay and happy.
d. Hans Hoffman's The Golden Wall (an abstract painting with no representational content) is aggressive.
e. Cage's Variations II is impersonal.
f. Coleridge's "The Dungeon" is an angry poem (at least in the first half).
g. "We Are Seven" (Wordsworth) is a sentimental poem.
h. Eliot's "Prufrock" is a compassionate poem.

In example a. the anthropomorphic predicates can be justly applied to the artwork in virtue of its subject matter. What is calm and serene are the gentle and loving expressions on the faces of the Mother, the child, and the infant John the Baptist. The natural setting—the delicately etched trees—too, may be called calm because they are not wind-tossed, and the blue sky serene because it is conducive to the mood of the represented characters. But Sircello says that these predicates may be applied to the work in a second way too: The painting is calm and serene because Raphael views his subject calmly and serenely. Here I should argue with Robinson that the "artistic act" of the painter need not be invoked, not because it may be construed differently though, but because it is the remote cause of the artwork's calmness and serenity and an obvious assumption in all human handiwork, and what is immediately perceived are the qualities as they pertain to the depicted subject matter. Examples b. and c. are different. In the Wedding Dance, the activities of the depicted persons are gay and happy. But the faces of the peasants are neither gay nor happy; rather, they are bland, stupid, and even brutal—which is ironic. Here Sircello says, it is the painter who "views" the happy scene ironically. But the ironic perspective is more properly regarded as an emergent quality of the painted scene. The expression on the faces of the peasants is in itself a tell-tale sign that they are not participating in the gaiety of the scene. This contrast alone carries the ironic perspective, which any viewer can draw as an implication from the presented scene. Once again, the artist drops out of consideration as irrelevant. In example b., the very characterization of the rape of the Sabine women as calm and aloof may be called in question since no representation of a rape scene can be viewed in that light unless something in it

points in that direction. Hence there is no ground even for saying that Poussin observes the scene and paints it in an aloof way. The characterization of Hoffman's The Golden Wall as aggressive and of Cage's music in example e. as impersonal, too, may be rejected on the ground that neither an abstract painting nor a composition of sounds can, in terms of our definition, be credited with having any content to be expressed or the power of expressing. Hence it would be improper to attribute to them expressive properties of any sort.

The attribution of anthropomorphic qualities to the poetic examples, too, could be justified without reference to the artist. Of Wordsworth's "We Are Seven" Sircello says that since the poem is not about sentimentality and since neither the child nor the narrator expresses sentimentality, that quality can only be predicated of the poet's treatment of his subject. But sentimentality or sympathy for the attitude of the little girl who refuses to believe that two of her siblings are dead is better thought of as a quality implicit in the presented situation which the poet-narrator registers simply by not stating it in so many words. Similarly, "angry" attributed to the poem "The Dungeon" more accurately characterizes the tone of voice of the speaker in the poem and the perspective presented by the description of the dungeon. "Compassionate" in the statement about "Prufrock" may describe the reader's response to the character's predicament rather than the character's portrait of himself.

Sircello argues that objective expression (chapter 4), in which feelings, etc. that a work is said to express are those of the represented subjects, too, "is a variety of artistic act" (155). Expression in the objective sense is an act which consists in capturing abstract qualities or essences, such as passion, terror, evil, barbarity, decadence, nostalgia, the sense of mystery, etc., which are not merely properties or features "objective" from the point of view of the artist, although they may be suggested by them, and not describable by any term in the "representation" family, like "portray," "depict," "delineate," and testable by their accuracy or correctness in relation to anything external to the art in question. They are obviously like emotions of the subjective sort, but standing out in our field of consciousness as those pertaining to or emanating from the art. Thus, in the statement about Aeschylus' Agamemnon that it is imbued with an exalted religiousity or that it expresses in a tone of pious horror the utter barbarity of the primitive world, what the play portrays by means of characterization, plot, and imagery is a violent world. But its tone of awe-struck and pious horror is not a palpable quality of the depicted subject; it can only be said to be expressed through an artistic act.

But here it may be argued that this sense of religious awe or horror could not be that quality or "essence" or sentiment which Sircello speaks of, unless it

was a feature derivable as an implication from the portrayed details of the drama. And this would be possible only if one of the characters or the chorus gave expression to it—as it happens in the Greek tragedy—or, alternatively, if the presented situation left the message unspoken, but by hinting at it allowed the reader to realize the implication. In either case, the pious tone of the play would be an objective property of its depicted subject. Other examples, such as "The Last Judgement of Michaelangelo expresses the awfulness and terror of Judgment Day," and "Wagner's 'Liebestod' theme expresses the all-consuming passion of Tristan and Isolde for one another," too may be explained in a similar way.

Subjective Factors

Another evidence of the artist's mind in his art is what Sircello calls the "subjective factors" (50-62), which are "forms of sensitivity" discoverable in the artwork, but outside of the anthropomorphic predicates applicable to it. This is another way in which art may be called expressive. "The expressiveness of art," Sircello observes, "amounts to more than the anthropomorphic properties it has" (85). Like the artistic acts, subjective factors "are not describable independently of the work," but, unlike artistic acts, they "are not describable in terms predicated of the work" (47). Of these, some can be replaced by a description of one of a variety of artistic acts and others can only be discerned as characteristics of the artists' mind. Here are some examples considered by him:

> "Howells' novels are animated by a love of the common."
> "the imagination of Little Dorrit (Dickens)"
> "the outlook of High Renaissance painting"

In these examples, since the attributes in question cannot obviously be predicated of the works themselves, they can only apply to the artists. Similarly, attributes like "affectionate," and "unsympathetic," spoken of as characterizing portrayals, renderings, narratives, etc. in the works of a Homer, Tolstoi, or Flaubert, cannot be applied to the works, but only to a pattern of activity characteristic of the artist. On the other hand, in the example

> "the sense of suffering and resignation in Negro religious wood carvings"

the represented figures it is that have the look of suffering. But Sircello says that its final reference is to the act of the artist who represented or captured that look in a particularly sensitive way, thus translating the statement into one of admiration for the artist's sensibility.

It may be urged, however, that when a critical statement refers to the artist, if not as person, then even conceived as some maker of the work, it is strictly irrelevant for the appreciation of the work. The first three examples are generalizing statements about a pervasive quality of the work, but also ascribable to the person who "put it there." Where the reference is directly to the subject matter of the work, as in the last example, it is legitimately an objective feature of the work and analyzable as such. Any attempt to trace it back to the mind behind the work would be uncalled for unless one were more interested in the artist and focusing on him. Similarly, too, would the attempt be to construct the total person of an author from his work or works: e.g., Baudelaire's "satanic personality" (Sircello's example).

But Sircello argues that there is no reason why "we cannot be talking both about the painting or poem and about the artist," for the descriptions of the artistic acts are coming from the works in question (27). Again, he says that at least in some cases "an anthropomorphic term may be applied adverbially to 'acts' or adjectivally to a 'thing' without difference in the sense of the term or of the sentences in which it is used." Thus one may, without change of meaning, say either that "Eliot's 'Prufrock' is a compassionate poem or that Eliot portrays Prufrock compassionately in his poem," as one may say that a person has a happy gleam in his eyes or that he is gleaming happily. These are "simply two grammatically different ways of referring to the same 'thing'" (29-31). But this is not true. For, although the grammatical shift makes no difference for the sense of the term in question, it does change the reference or focus of the sentences in which it is used: that "Prufrock" is a compassionate poem is a statement about the poem (whether the adjective truly applies to it or not), whereas "Eliot portrays Prufrock compassionately" is a statement about the poet and his act. Moreover, one cannot argue, as Sircello does, that the act and the thing are inseparable and that a description of the one is a description of the other. A smiling look on a person's face may result from the natural lay of his face, but his act of smiling entails an inference as to what made him smile. There is thus both a semantic and logical difference between the two descriptions. In the case of the "Prufrock" poem, at any rate, we are not urged to draw an inference as to the artistic act from the "compassionate" quality of the poem.

Objection may also be taken to calling the "Prufrock" poem compassionate. For if, as Sircello recognizes, the predicate cannot apply to the subject matter—Prufrock himself is not compassionate—or to the poem's formal qualities—rhythm, meter, etc—why call it compassionate at all, unless the reader were speaking of his own compassion for the poor agonized soul? Similarly, if there can be nothing "aloof" about the lines, masses, and colors of Poussin's The Rape

of the Sabines and about its subject matter, why call it aloof in the first place and then invoke an artistic act to account for what is obviously not a description of the work itself? One might also object to characterizing Cage's Variations II as "impersonal," or by any other positive attribute for that matter, since it is, on its face, a mere medley of noises. But if it is claimed as a piece of art and so viewed by some, "impersonal" imputed to it can only mean that the sounds seem to lack any human quality. And so they do. But that quality, or the lack of it, is still "in" the music. In any case, then, the artist is out of the picture, and so is the artistic act.

III. Object-Property Approach

Sircello's "Artistic Acts" theory was, as we have seen, mounted as a challenge to the Bouwsma-Beardsley approach through thing-property, which was set out to exorcise the twin ghosts of Intentional and Affective Fallacies. Sircello attempted to reinvoke the spirit of the artist, if not as a historical person, but in the form of a projected agency or as the mind behind the work of art and as a logical necessity for explaining at least some of its perceived features and their characterization in anthropomorphic terms. But there seems to be some justification for the objectivist's focus on the artwork, instead of on the mind behind it. The artwork is after all an "object," not merely a physical object of course, but a perceptual or cognitive object given to our attention and it is grasped, not as an act on somebody's part, but as a bunch of properties. Feelings or human qualities, which are generally regarded as the value-grounding elements of an aesthetic object, are not the feelings either of its maker or of its observer, but, as Beardsley points out, "qualities of the phenomenal object," located in the artwork, which we usually describe in human terms. Thus, when we call a piece of music "sad" it does not mean that the sadness is that of the artist or of the listener. It is a feeling "about the music itself," not what the Expression Theory talked about—i.e., "self-expression" of the state of mind of the composer or the state of mind of the listener (1958: 325-34). If thus what is termed "expressive quality" can be taken as a quality of the aesthetic object itself (taking, for the nonce, music as the paradigm case), then, the best way of describing it would be by pointing to the object itself and calling attention to its qualities. And this would eliminate the need for the very term "expression." Thus, Beardsley is led to his well-known pronouncement: "Nothing but confusion can result until the word is eliminated from the vocabulary of aesthetics" (Hospers, 284). The difficulty with the word "express," Beardsley remarks, is that it is a relational term

and requires two terms: an X that does the expressing and a Y that is expressed, whereas on the object-property view no such distinction need be postulated. When we say "The rose is red" there is only one thing, namely, the rose, and we describe its qualities "in exactly the same way that music is sad and joyous" (331). The terminology of expression only creates pseudo-problems in aesthetic discussions. Bouwsma too rejects the expresser-expressed distinction (Hospers, 224-49). He claims that qualities like sadness and joyousness are literally in the aesthetic object, like redness in a rose, and hence that it does not make sense to ask "What does the music express?"

But the object-properties model is attended by its own set of problems. Whether we choose to discard or retain the term "expression," there is the initial question of whether qualities like sadness can be said to belong to or inhere in objects, such as a painting or a piece of music. Are they "perceptual" properties in any sense of the term and available for analysis? In other words, are they object properties in the sense that they are existentially independent of the perceiver? Again, if somehow they are taken to be "in" the object, the age-long question remains as to how they came to be "in" non-mental, non-sentient beings, which, as bare perceived facts, do not possess them? Primary qualities like redness may be said to be "out there" in the apple as they are independent of any perceiver, but secondary qualities like "deliciousness" are "in here" in the subject. What we have in the aesthetic object are a sensory surface (sounds, words, colors, shapes, etc.) and a feeling import, like sadness, which may be called "phenomenal" in the sense that it is perceived and perceivable. Now, to be phenomenal, qualities must be possessed by the object, inhere in it, as part of its physiological structural gestalt. According to Beardsley, the feeling import in music, say, "sadness," is not an object quality of the sensory material, except where it is an obvious imitation of the human voice. Neither is it "sufficiently invariant from person to person to be attributed to the music itself as a perceptual object" (1958: 325-34). It is rather a quality of the "phenomenal object"—by which I understand that he means the object "as perceived." It is a function of a set of sensory qualities, such as slowness, low pitch, and falling melodic patterns, so that it is heard as a quality of the music's sensory surface. It is an "emergent quality" of the sensory surface—that is to say, it is perceived as resulting from the sequence of single notes of a musical passage as a feature of its "region" taken as a whole, a "regional quality," as he calls it, or a relational or configurational quality. And since, as an emergent quality, it is related to the qualities of the perceptual field, it is to be attributed to the musical object (Hospers, 284-86).

But here the tough question is: Is it or can it be so perceived by everybody or anybody, inasmuch as it is not an objective feature of the music, and dependent on a percipient? We gather from Beardsley's discussions that he answers this question in two ways: First, the qualities of the sensory surface, the local conditions under which the musical composition tends to be sad, such as slow tempo, low pitch, and so forth, may be called its "sad-making" qualities. But all compositions having these features need not necessarily be sad. "Yet they are testable" (1958: 330). Second, this human quality must be fairly apparent to anyone who is able to grasp the sequence of notes as melodic and rhythmic patterns. This ability would require that one adopt what Beardsley calls "the aesthetic point of view," which consists in attending closely to the art object and recognizing its aesthetically relevant or value-grounding features (1982: 15-34). Even this argument does not, however, establish the complete objectivity of the aesthetic qualities. One cannot escape the conclusion that the aesthetic value of an object—call it feeling import, human qualities, or expressive qualities—is in the final analysis dependent on a certain kind of point of view or "seeing as."

Both Vincent Thomas and Douglas Morgan consider this question at length (Hospers, 250-83). Thomas maintains that the whole idea of the aesthetic object in terms of an "expressive thing" and "the thing expressed" presents a pseudo-problem, for the thing expressed, the aesthetic quality ("sadness," and so forth) is a presented quality of the object itself as experienced. The listener of music, for example, doesn't apprehend the sound waves merely, but the sound quality of sadness. The aesthetic object is, then, a phenomenological object perceived as already possessing the quality in question, the ontological object (the sensory material) being seen, both by the artist who selects it and by the observer, as already "charged" with feeling import. But how then do materials come to be charged and are there such ready-made materials—colors, notes, shapes, words, etc.—which could serve as the medium of art in all contexts and under all conditions? And what, in any case, is a "charged" medium? Thomas' argument fails to answer these questions. It does not also settle the question of observer-dependence and variability in the recognition of qualities.

Morgan rightly points out that the two-term theory of expression, dismissed by Beardsley and Thomas, is in fact unavoidable, for the sense qualities—rhythm, pitch, tempo, volume, in the case of music—are "out there," but "sadness," "nostalgia," and the like can only be such only to the listener/observer. Variability too goes with subjectiveness of response. Hence Morgan concludes that it is empirically difficult to establish the musical object as the location of the perceived quality or import. Yet, he admits, that it is true that the quality appears to be "in" the object and that the corresponding response too can be said to be appropriate to it: e.g., slow tempo, low pitch, and the like correlate with subjective sadness. Morgan's skepticism regarding the objectivity of the perceived quality seems justified (at least with respect to music), since there is no invariable relation between the musical form and the human quality attributed to it, as many critics since Hanslick and Edmund Gurney have reiterated. And, consensus among observers cannot be a conclusive test of objectivity, as Morgan himself admits.

Goran Hermeren (1988), too, arrives at the conclusion, after a thorough analysis of the nature of aesthetic qualities, that aesthetic qualities are "not publicly observable properties of publicly observable things," that they cannot be defined in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, and that they cannot be said to "belong" to objects in any but a weak sense of that term. They are, according to him, "tertiary qualities" derivable from primary qualities (shape, size, mass, motion) and secondary qualities (color, taste, smell, etc.)—both of which are fairly objective—and dependent on their being perceived by an observer. They have a phenomenological, rather than an ontological and conceptual status. Aesthetic perception is culture-dependent and has a fair degree of inter-subjectivity within a given cultural context. Margolis, too, maintains that art objects being culturally emergent entities, aesthetic perception is a culturally informed perceptual discrimination (1980: 22). But I should be inclined to think that observer-dependence and cultural/institutional relativism may be true of art in some forms or of certain aspects of art objects, but they are largely not true of literature and of certain other art forms, like dramatic dance, portrait painting, and sculpture, which deal with basic or elemental feelings and responses which cut across cultural or intitutional barriers.

The object-property model provides no scope for the role of expression in art, because the aesthetically relevant properties of an object are held to be descriptive features of it, not the result of an act of expression. Therefore, apart from the epistemological question of how we come to see such qualities in art objects, is there justification for the common practice of characterizing all aesthetic qualities indiscriminately as "expressive qualities" (taking "aesthetic" and "expressive" as synonymous) simply on the ground that they seem relevant or valuable to us in human terms? Strictly, the property of an object can be called expressive only if it serves as an inferential sign of an intentional state. For example, a smiling look yields, under appropriate conditions, inferential data as to the putative state of mind of the person who wears that look. A work of art, as a whole or some feature of it, may be called expressive only if it reveals the psychological state of the person or persons represented or depicted in the work.

Here a distinction seems in order between "expressive" and "aesthetic" qualities, because not all aesthetic attributions are of the expressive sort, in that they do not necessarily point to intentional states, nor do they presuppose an expressive act. As Beardsley points out, "graceful" applied to a vase or to human movement, or "dignified" applied to a person's gait or bearing, and also physical metaphors like "soaring spirits," "sinking into despair," are human qualities, but do not denote intentional states (1982: 108-9). By the same token, in terms of our definition, the formal properties of an art object, such as the pitch, tempo, volume, or movement of music, the colors and shapes of abstract painting, the metrical or other sound qualities of a verse, and so forth do not count as expressive qualities. They are more properly object qualities—perceptible qualities of the structural gestalt of the work itself. Alan Tormey, too, distinguishes between the expressive and non-expressive properties of art (127-29). Expressive properties, like tenderness and anguish, are, he says, "aesthetic correlates of intentional states of persons," whereas nonexpressive properties, like duration, pitch, color, weight, etc., may be attributed to artworks more directly as they are constitutive of the gestalt of the works themselves. But Tormey also says that expressive properties are dependent in some ways upon nonexpressive properties (129). For instance, he says that "The music expresses/is expressive of sadness" can be taken as a statement about "certain phenomenal properties that can be characterized as noninferentially [my italics] expressive" (122). But this seems to me to compromise Tormey's own position that inferential connection to intentionality is a criterial condition for the correct application of expressive predicates. Our ascription of aesthetic qualities to artworks does no doubt, in general, depend on the nonaesthetic qualities that they exhibit. But in a case like music, where there are no inner aspects in it and no question of an inferential linkage to them, how can its nonexpressive qualities reveal any expressive qualities? No doubt an expressive predicate like sadness is commonly employed to characterize its human quality. But the whole point is that there is no basis for such a characterization. In the case of a figurative painting (e.g., Mona Lisa), a dance, a drama, poem, or novel, there is at least some justification for such characterizations, as in them there are persons voicing or showing their inner states, or descriptions of persons expressing those states. We call such works sad, cheerful, enigmatic, etc. as an elliptical remark about the quality of the depicted subject matter or represented situation. Thus, when we characterize a poem as a sad poem—which is to say that it is expressive of sadness—the predicate is descriptive of a feature of the work. But it should be taken as a "relational predicate" and not as a "one-place predicate," as Tormey says of the expressive character of artworks in general, for the predicate actually refers to the persons portrayed in the work or the depicted

events. This is the clearest and fullest sense of the "expressive properties" of a work of art, for works of art cannot be supposed to exhibit "full-blooded" sentient states like anguish and light-heartedness. But, in that case, as Beardsley has suggested, one might as well call them "descriptive properties" (which they are), and thus avoid compromising Tormey's own "intentionalist" definition of expression.

It is generally recognized that aesthetically valuable qualities of art are not all of the same type or necessarily of the anthropomorphic or expressive sort (Beardsley, Margolis, Hermeran). These qualities may be roughly divided into those relating to the structural gestalt of an artwork ("unified," "balanced," "symmetrical," "tightly knit"), those that are value-laden and designate affective responses to artworks ("shocking," "trite," "impressive"), and finally expressive qualities or emotive qualities ("sad," "solemn," "cheerful") which inhere in the artwork as the import of its presented subject matter or message. Of these the first and the last can be tested by reference to the work, whereas affective qualities, although they have to do with emotions, need not arise from the work as part of its evident character, and are therefore dependent solely on observer reaction, and variable and inconstant. Formal properties, like those of color, shape, line, and sound, have no feeling import in themselves unless they, in an observable way, define, imitate, illustrate, or suggest, however faintly, the represented object or subject matter of the artwork. They may, however, seem to acquire it in association with message qualities through contamination. But this is a purely chimerical, albeit important, feature of our experience of art objects and one on which there may even be a large measure of consensus.[2] Nevertheless, this cannot be reason enough for regarding the feeling import as inherent in the formal medium itself. If thus formal properties do not even possess the feeling import attributed to them, there cannot be any question of their being expressive in any sense.

Another way of arguing that formal elements can be expressive is to say that they have the aptness or disposition in a large number of cases to induce feelings like sadness, cheerfulness, etc. in the public, not necessarily in association with message properties, but even by themselves. We may call them "dispositional properties." Thus bright colors induce cheerfulness, sombre colors melancholy, light accents or tripping movements light-heartedness, and so on. Such responses to external stimuli may have a basis in our natural interests and admirations, but that does not justify our attributing them to objects as object proper-

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Sanskrit Criticism, chap. 8 "The Logic of Interpretation."

ties, much less as expressive properties, in the absence of an invariable relation to overt expressions of sadness, melancholy, and so on.

Writing about musical expression, Peter Kivy (Margolis, 1987)) rejects both the "arousal" theory and the theory of art as expression. He argues that musical expression should be construed as "expressive" of sadness in the same way as "weeping willows" and the faces of Saint Bernards are "expressive" of sadness without their being sad or making us sad—without, in other words, being expressions of sadness. We recognize their sadness. Similarly, we recognize the emotive properties of music as properties of the object. The emotions, then, are "in" the music. That is to say that the sensory features of music (tonality, rhythm, tempo) are isomorphic with features of human behavior expressive of them. "Expression" in this sense does not of course require an intentional context to interpret the term. But the faces of Saint Bernards can also, however, look expressive in our sense because Saint Bernards have souls and could express feelings in their own characteristic ways, and an intentional link to inner states is conceivable. But weeping willows and musical sounds cannot be placed in any such context. The only ground for attributing anthropomorphic qualities to them would be that they resemble or share some common features with expressive human behavior or that they have a disposition to arouse emotions in us. But in neither case can they be called genuinely expressive. Rather, some term of the representation or imitation family would be more appropriate in describing them. Moreover, since music has no objects of representation unless they are arbitrarily imputed to it, how can it share features with them? How, for instance, can it represent "the gaiety of a running brook" or "the brooding quality of the Hebrides seas" (Kivy's examples) when those objects themselves cannot be supposed to have the qualities in question? All that we can say is that the music imitates the sounds of the running brook or the roar of the ocean tides. And how also can isomorphism with any definite human emotion be established since one cannot say that a given sound pattern has an invariable association with such and such an emotion in the absence of a representational context?

If it is conceded that the formal or sensory features of a work of art could not possess expressive qualities and that expressive predicates rightly designate only what may be applied to human beings, the only justification for their ascription to formal features and to entire art objects would be by invoking metaphoric usage. Both Beardsley and Goodman are inclined to this view. There is a good reason too why we often make such attributions, namely, the common tendency to extend the quality of the effect to the cause, as a maxim in Sanskrit has it: karane karyopacarat. The music "evokes" sadness in me; therefore it is a sad music. However, Margolis maintains that "artworks literally possess expres-

sive qualities—in the cultural contexts in which they exist—and ... expressiveness or expression in art and in human behavior need not be construed or linked merely by way of metaphor" (1980: 182). It is not clear how even in particular cultural contexts a passage of music or an abstract painting, in its formal body, can be claimed to literally possess an expressive function, even if Margolis' theory that artworks are culturally emergent entities is allowed. It is possible, he says further, that a piece of music "may exhibit a certain natural expressiveness," for instance, natural gaiety, by organizing a pattern of sounds and by being "a natural sign of emotions" (96) on the analogy of a smile on a person's face, which can be literally sad "because it is characteristically associated with or induced by a certain sadness." "But if such ascriptions are conceded," Margolis goes on to say, "no conceptual barrier remains against the literal ascription of expressive qualities to artworks (contra Goodman)" (192). But musical sounds cannot be analogous to a smile on a person's face for the reasons already stated. Undeniably, some music may carry "resonances" of human expressiveness, for example, melodic tones may be analogous to tones of speech, or wails or cries. But then such resonances cannot be a "natural sign" of emotions without being intentional, and so cannot be called expressive in the sense defined here. Music is intrinsically incapable of expressing anything, as many critics have attested. And so are formal features, by the same token. To say with Langer that such features are symbolic of forms of feeling or that sound patterns are iconic of, correspond to, psychic patterns would be to appeal to intuition without producing any demonstrable proof.

IV. Expression in Literature

This lengthy excursion into the problems of expression in the arts in general has been necessary for clearing the way for establishing the claim made at the outset of the chapter that in regard to the problem of expression literature stands on a different footing from other art forms of the nonrepresentational order. This difference is due to its being in a medium that is self-revealing and self-expressive—a feature which it shares with some of the pictorial and plastic forms, and the dramatic/mimetic arts, including dance, and also due to its distinct cognitive status as a verbal art. Part of the confusion in the debates on expression in art, as noted at the beginning of the chapter, has been due to our common habit of lumping together all art forms into one generic mould called "art" without regard for significant differences in their modalities. The subject matter as well as expressive power of each art is determined by the nature of its

medium, as many critics since the eighteenth century, have pointed out. What words can convey musical sounds and plastic materials cannot, and vice versa. In terms of their expressiveness, bodily gestures and movements too enjoy a special categorial status, being a live medium capable of accessing inner states in a manner that is not possible for the others.

The difficulty that we have observed in attributing expressiveness to the formal or sensory features of art objects is that in them there are no meanings as distinct from their formal bodies, unless meanings are imputed to them, whereas an expressive sign or object must be a union of two terms consisting of an expressive thing or expresser and the thing expressed. Only some artistic forms exhibit such a structure: the verbal form, the pictorial form in which the depicted subject is a person (or some other sentient being which is capable of expressing) whose expression is effected through bodily gesture, and the body itself as an expressive medium. There are thus basically only two mediums of expression: speech and physical motion of some sort. And the arts employing one or both of these mediums are: literature, figurative painting and sculpture, and the dramatic arts, including mime and expressive dance. Stage drama includes both speech and physical expression. According to Bharata, author of the ancient Sanskrit text on dramaturgy, the Nāṭyaśāstra and propounder of the Rasa theory, the essential modes of expression (abhinaya) are speech (vācika) and physical action (āṅgika). It is these two media that are inherently meaningful and self-expressive, and autonomous insofar as their meanings are contained within their own formal bodies. Meaningfulness is an inalienable property of these two media. There is no word without its meaning nor is there an attitude or posture of the human body that is not "expressive" in some way, i.e. that is not indicative of some state of mind: Even a neutral gesture can be expressive of neutrality or indifference, a sleeping body of restfulness, provided there is a context for linking these physical conditions to a mental state. (A dead body, too, no doubt wears a certain expression without being an indication of a state of mind, but only in comparison with the expressiveness of a living body.) These two media may thus be termed "self-expressive" as they carry their meanings on the face. Artworks in these mediums are either pictorial representations of persons in action postures or gesture, or they employ speech acts, or bodily gesture, or both, or they contain verbal descriptions of physical action. Instrumental music (as opposed to song) and, among the visual arts, pictorial or plastic representations of natural objects, abstract art in general, and architecture, on the other hand, depend for their aesthetic significance, much like natural objects, entirely on the observer, for they carry no meaning whatever in themselves. This distinction between self-expressive and nonself-expressive mediums goes a long way in clarifying many of

the problems in which our critical debates on expression are often seen to get bogged down.

A further distinction is also in order between the two self-expressive media mentioned above—physical gesture, which as an expressive act serves as a perceptual sign of an inner meaning or content and which is directly apprehended by the senses, and the word which is also a sign, albeit in a different sense, and which has but a mediate relation to the thing apprehended (referent). A verbal sign is an arbitrary symbol or label which stands for a general concept, thought, or mental image, and is therefore not a "natural" sign of anything. In Indian logic, verbal knowledge is defined as knowledge of an object that is not in immediate contact with the organ of perception (asannikrste arthe jñānam). But yet, the verbal sign is in closer, more immediate contact with its meaning—thought, reference, or the idea of feeling—than the behavioral sign is to its object, namely, the mental state. On the word being uttered, its meaning is immediately grasped, although this is not to say that complex semantic structures yield up their meanings without reasoning. Physical expression, on the other hand, has to be inferentially connected to the expressed thing before it can become a sign of that thing for the observer. For the agent of expression, of course, it is in immediate causal relation to the feeling that generated it. Herein lies the difference between a natural sign and an arbitrary symbol, such as the word. Even so both the verbal sign, which is arbitrary, and behavioral expression, which is but the ground for an inference, are both in one sense one remove from the inner object/event (referent). This does not, however, militate against their self-signifying character by reason of their being signs. And as signs they are binary entities: they are each a union of two logically distinct terms, namely, their own form (audible or material) and an external something—a mentally perceived sense or object-content (artha, in Sanskrit). The material or phonetic form by itself carries no meaning: the physical gesture has to be connected to an inference-warranting context of occurrence, and the phonetic form of the word to a system of signs and a speech act to its context of utterance. The Signification Theory which, as Beardsley has shown (1958: 332-37) cannot be applied to music, architecture, and the like, and to the formal features of an artwork in themselves, can thus be applied literally to art in the self-signifying mode—to all those features of it, that is, that are representational of human beings and their mental traits, actions, and other behavioral manifestations. For it is only behavioral expression and speech that can be said to carry meaning in either of the two senses discussed.

But signifying is not expressing, for signs can signify, be meaningful, without expressing. Natural signs, as opposed to behavioral signs, as well as verbal

symbols do so without there being an expressing agent, in terms of the definition proposed here. The word or the language system itself needs no user of the language to be able to signify, nor an object-symbol, such as the stop sign, which of course serves as a sentence-surrogate. However, for art forms of the self-signifying type, this difficulty does not arise, for both in behavioral expression and speech acts there is necessarily an assumed person behind the expressive act: a person registering a feeling and exhibiting it through word, action or gesture. Here what Ogden and Richards say of the verbal sign-situation bears on the point at issue. They say that "in speaking a sentence we are giving rise to … at least two sign-situations. One is interpreted from symbols to reference and so to referent; the other is interpreted from verbal signs to the attitude, mood, interest, purpose, desire and so forth of the speaker, and thence to the situation, circumstances and conditions in which the utterance is made … Thus we may interpret from a symbol to a reference and then take this reference as a sign of an attitude in the speaker …" (1923: 223-24).

A literary work—play, poem, or novel—is typically made up of direct speeches (dialogues) and/or indirect speeches (narratives, descriptions, reports) of portrayed characters—of their speeches and behavioral expressions. The created artwork itself may of course be regarded as a sign-situation expressing the feelings, attitudes, and outlook of its author. But since, as we have seen, we need not call for the author to explain the work, our interpretation can proceed only from the verbal symbol to its meaning and take this meaning as a sign of an attitude directly in the speaker or speakers in the work, in its context of occurrence/utterance. Or, where there are no represented characters, as a sign of an attitude on the part of the narrator or "dramatic speaker." But since this speaking voice is strictly what is presented in the work the authorial presence need not be invoked. Even in narratives where the author projects himself in an obtrusive way by editorializing on characters and incidents, his voice becomes that of a narrator and thus part of the narrative. In ironic works (e.g., Swift's "A modest Proposal," Gulliver's Travels), the author is present merely as another speaker over and above the character speaker, who presents a point of view. But even he has no existence apart from the meaning of the work. For this ironic point of view is not recognized as any particular speaker's point of view, much less as that of the putative author, but as a meaning arising out of the presented sign-situation. Thus in no case is the artist's intention or act needed to explain the meaning of the work. All this has been made clear in connection with our discussion of Sircello's theory.

In a literary work—narrative, lyric, or drama—as in a painting of a human scene, there may emerge from the presentation a meaning or a point of view or an implication that is not ascribable to any represented character, but is derivable from the work, or more precisely, from the represented expressive situation or act: e.g., the irony in the Breughel, Wordsworth's "We Are Seven." The sentimentality in Wordsworth's poem arises from the account given of the child; it is neither that of the character in the poem, nor of the poet, nor solely that of the reader. It is situational; it is contained in the situation as its meaning to be grasped by anybody who is alive to it. Dramatic irony in Othello's handkerchief incident is another case in point. Similar examples may be found in Hemingway's narratives, especially in his short stories, where, in his characteristic deadpan style of understatement and omission, he presents an emotion-producing situation and leaves the emotive implication to be elicited by the reader. It is in this sense that expressive properties can be said to reside in the subject matter—by which we mean the depicted human scenes—although, in the ultimate analysis, there are persons "expressing"—the character or narrator, or the author himself by a long stretch.

This is another respect, then, in which the verbal sign-situation which constitutes the medium of expression of a literary work differs from the sign-situation of an artwork in the nonself-expressive medium, as does a stage drama or a pictorial representation of a dramatic/narrative scene. In stage acting and dancing, the character or the dancer, in his or her role as the portrayed character, may be said to be expressing feelings in propria persona. Pavlova's Swan Lake represents a dying swan. And the feelings portrayed by the dancer are justly those expressed by the dying swan, although the dancer's person is also inseparably present to the audience as a body performing the action. But the personal identity of Pavlova itself does not figure in the audience's field of consciousness; the dancer could, in fact, remain anonymous.

If exhibiting or manifesting of feelings and attitudes, rather than the mere stating of ideas, is, as we have said, the essence of expression, then, literature as a verbal art contains meanings pertaining to the emotional behavior of people. The presentation of such meanings, by representing, portraying, or describing characters engaged in expressing them, is its special task. What may be termed as expressed are the behavioral signs of inner events—speech (which is also a behavioral act) or physical gesture. As the Nāṭyaśāstra has it, dramatic expression consists in what is manifested in behavior in response to an object or situation (abhinayāḥ anubhāvā eva, Abhinavagupta's commentary). Whether in poetry or drama, these meanings are not, again, given in so many words as mere statements, but "showed" or presented as dramatic events—that is, as events in a causal chain of objects on which emotions are directed, or, in other words, of

objects intended as objects of emotion, and behavioral expressions or reactions to those objects, which in conjunction constitute an emotive situation. Behavioral expressions may also occur in the form of involuntary physical reactions, such as change of color, perspiration, tears, trembling, etc., which emanate from mental states as effects and outward signs of those states. They are no doubt not intentional acts, being merely symptomatic reactions. But expressions they are nonetheless since, for one thing, as Tormey has pointed out, they occur in association with emotion-producing, intentional objects and entail their presence (Tormey, 20-21). And for another, though in one sense they are the effects of their emotions, from the point of view of the observer, they are indicative signs of those emotions, and can be counted as expressive. In terms of the distinction made by Ogden and Richards cited above, a literary work may then be understood as a symbol-situation in which the verbal symbols, in their referential function, deliver a reference (meaning), from which we interpret to a body of referents in the objective world—which is the world of the poem or play—consisting of a sign-situation, namely, people and their behavioral expressions, in words, gestures, and action, of their feelings toward objects and situations which cause in them those expressions. The expressions that are symbolized in literature are then fundamentally causal in nature inasmuch as they are the effect of what they express and therefore are natural signs of feelings which they signify. Here Sircello's contention against the view of Langer and Beardsley (188-89) that artworks are not like natural expressions and that natural signs or symptoms are not the domain of art, is right in that it shows that expression is fundamentally causal in nature (210). But the main thrust of Beardsley's attack is on linking the work causally to its author, whereas in actual fact the expression that takes place in the work is that of the characters figuring in the sign-situation, of which the work is a verbal representation or description.

The difficulty in establishing a formal causal connection between expression and the expressed, behavioral or verbal expression and feeling is that there is no invariable concomitance between the two. Expressions of a particular description—angry words or scowls, sad smiles, trembling—need not regularly, necessarily, or with any inevitability accompany the occurrence of a felt emotion. One can refrain from expressing what one has or pretend to be expressing what one doesn't have, as in acting (Sircello, 249-51; Tormey, 51-52). Nor do verbal expressions of pain describe the natural expression of pain, being arbitrary symbols. The relation between objects and their emotions, too, is inconstant and contingent. The same woman may be an object of love to a lover and an object of indifference to a monk or to one who is grieving or is in acute physical pain. William P. Alston (17-24) argues that since facial and other behavioral expres-

sions (interjections, groans, squeals, writhings, tones of voice) are not a reliable indication of feelings and attitudes, they are better designated by some such terms as "show," "demonstrate," "evince," and "betray." Only linguistic expression is a reliable indication of inner states because it is a rule-governed behavior. Speech acts have a convention to back them up. True, but yet, when contextualized—that is, given the appropriate circumstances—expressions of feeling, behavioral or linguistic, when they do occur, become associated with their feelings with a fair measure of regularity, and so are regarded as effects of their causes. Hence Bharata's "Rasa Sutra" (formula for expression of emotions) emphasizes "conjunction" or the totality of conditions (samyoga) constituting the "conceptual complex," which provides the necessary inferential linkage to inner states (Tormey, 49).

A literary work, as a representational form of art, may then be expected to present a human situation with an intentional context as an integral part of its content, which can be interpreted with a fair degree of certainty. Any ambiguities that it may present us with are only those that we meet with in any speech or behavioral act situation in real life, and can be removed by means of the rational criteria available to us in ordinary discourse. As Tormey points out, one source of ambiguity in our talk about expression in art is that we often fail to distinguish clearly between acts of expression contained in the work and what we can justly attribute to the work itself as its expressive property (138). In the nonrepresentational arts, there are neither expressive acts nor any intentional contexts. Even such of those as have these features, i.e. representational forms, may of course be difficult to interpret (e.g., the Brueghel painting, the enigmatic smile on the face of Mona Lisa). But this difficulty is inherent in interpretation of even ordinary human gestures and actions in the absence of any verbal corroboration. Such hermeneutic problems are not peculiar to art. But literature as a verbal art has this advantage over the others—which is that what is presented in it is not merely reported, but often spelled out in direct comments on the represented content by characters or by the narrator in descriptive passages, the verbalizing shedding additional light on the depicted situations.

In terms of its expressiveness, a literary work may then be defined as a verbal representation or depiction of an expressive situation in which people are engaged in acts of expression, exhibiting their feelings, moods, or attitudes in various ways: directly in dramatized speech, or indirectly in reported or described action or gesture. In either case, what we have in it are verbally represented acts of expression as they happen in the world outside of the work. This being the case, expressive or anthropomorphic predicates denotative of human emotions, like sad, joyous, angry, comical, and so forth would be correctly at

tributable only to the actors engaged in expression, to their states of mind, or to their actions expressive of those states. By extension, they may also be attributed to works that contain such explicit expression contexts as their represented content or meaning: Hamlet is a drama in which the action situation is tragic and the main characters too express sadness or grief, and the impact of the events too is such as to provoke tragic feelings in them, which they register in their speech and behavior. Therefore we call it a tragedy to characterize the dominant emotional tone of the play. In a similar way, a human portrait or sculpture, a painting of an expository or narrative scene, or a dance, too, may be given expressive attributes. The attributes we apply to a work are usually of two types: Either they are derived from the dominant tone or impression projected by the work: e.g., the sense of suffering, anguish, and pity embedded in a given set of circumstances and expressed by the persons involved in it, which goes by the name of tragic pathos. Or they are are sometimes characterizations of our response to the presented circumstances, even if they may not explicitly be those of the persons involved, as when we call "Prufrock" a compassionate poem although the character expresses no compassion for himself, but feels self-pity, rather. The anger and hatred we feel toward the Puritan witch-hunters in Arthur Miller's The Crucible is expressed also by the victims and others in the play, but we may wish to call it a tragedy or an angry tirade, depending on how we choose to characterize it. Both these ways of describing the work are justifiable because they have their basis in, they spring from, what may be commonly perceived as the objective quality of the work and are taceable finally to the events, attitudes, and acts of expression presented in the work itself.

Tormey clearly recognizes the difference between the representational and nonrepresentational art forms in terms of their having intentional contexts or intentional objects, or their being context-neutral. But yet he maintains that artworks are "ambiguously self-expressive objects" and that expressive ambiguity "is an inherent feature of most if not all of our art" (140-41). This assumption, in his opinion, can account for the presence of critical divergence concerning the expressive properties of artworks. I should, however, think that in the light of the clarification he himself has provided of the sense/s in which artworks can be called expressive, it should be possible to eliminate any ambiguity and the consequent divergence in critical judgement. At any rate, in the case of literature, the possibility for expressive ambiguity is minimal, and, as I have argued elsewhere, critical divergence or even convergent interpretations are not inescapable.[3] Much less are they to be deemed the goal of our interpretive labours.

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[3] *Sanskrit Criticism*, chap. 7 "Style and Meaning."

Conclusion

I have argued that literature, being a representational art form dealing with persons in expression contexts, and being also in a self-expressive medium in which the very performing of speech acts would make it expressive within the meaning defined here, there is no difficulty in applying expressive or anthropomorphic attributes to the represented content. I have further argued that art forms in the nonself-expressive media, or even the purely formal (phonological) features of literature, are not fit candidates for the application of expressive predicates since they carry no meanings in themselves. By the same token, natural objects, too, cannot be expressive of anything; they can only figure as objects in somebody's expressive act, i.e., as objects of emotion or attention. Expressive properties ascribed to them (as when a willow is called "compassionate") are resemblance properties of the anthropomorphic sort. Hence it would be wrong to derive the expressiveness of works of art from any such "expressiveness" imputed to objects and scenes of the natural world (contra Robinson, 83). It is in literature, then, as in the other "imitative" arts which employ physical gesture as their medium or as their representational content, that the expression theory may be seen to come into full play. Other applications of expression terms should be considered either illegitimate or loosely metaphorical. Expression is essentially a human act, as Sircello has insisted, and there is no expressiveness without an expressing agent and an expressive act. But the object-quality approach of Beardsley and others too may be entertained without loss to Sircello's agent-act approach, provided they are both suitably modified to fit the account given here of the concept of expression. There need be no disjunction between the expressive act and the expressive quality, because an artwork, such as a poem, dance, or drama, presents an act, which is an object of perception and comes to us as qualified in a certain way—that is, as possessed of certain qualities: sadness, cheerfulness, and so forth, in virtue of which it is designated as expressive. The act-object and its qualities are grasped simultaneously, not being contemplable one apart from the other.

6

Expression and Communication in Music

James W. Manns

The fundamental conviction which grounds and animates this chapter is that there exists a firm connection between expressiveness in music and the values we place on particular musical compositions. The better the music, that is to say, the stronger will be our inclination to find it expressive; and, rounding out the biconditional, the more deeply expressive we find a work to be, the greater will be the value that we ascribe to it. Of course not all music is expressive; in fact probably most of the music that exists and has existed across the centuries deserves to be called inexpressive. This would explain why most of it is never heard—or, if heard, is heard once, then is heard no more. We listen to what we value (what perverse soul would have it otherwise?!): expressiveness, in a word, is an *achievement*.

In developing this theme, I will proceed in the following manner. First, to support a normative interpretation of expression such as this, I look into what perhaps constitutes the primary wellspring of insight into human character and human being—the language we speak. There, often quite unreflectively, we tip our hand as to our basic attitudes on any number of topics, and in this instance our language seems to be telling us that we value expressiveness.

Once this link between value and expressiveness has been confirmed, I will then offer a brief history of the place of expression in music theory. If philosophical issues were to be settled democratically, there is no question that expressionism, in one form or another, would emerge as the preeminent explanation of the whereabouts of musical significance. Still, the majority is not always correct (indeed, is it even *often* correct?), and beyond this matter there does exist a rich variety of suggestions as to how this act of expression is accomplished. While I am confident that in this instance the majority view should be allowed to prevail, nevertheless the various accounts of how expression is achieved in music can not all be right. I will conclude, then, by offering my own version of the mechanics of this achievement, a version reached by selecting certain elements from this

theory or that, and rejecting others. Perhaps this endeavor, as with so many others in the philosophical domain, will bear out the Leibnizean maxim that "the great number of systems is correct concerning a large portion of what they affirm, but less so regarding what they deny."[1] (1965: 607)

What the Language Tells Us

Certain uses of "express" and "expression" seem to have no particular aesthetic significance: "Children and politicians should learn to express themselves more clearly"; here we could practically replace "express themselves" with "speak" and not lose any vital content. It takes time for children to master the art of using language effectively, and politicians, deceptively. "I didn't really mean that for you to leave you would have to pass over my corpse—it's just an expression, that's all." In this case, "an expression" signifies nothing more than "a timeworn figure of speech." Both of these uses do meet the minimal condition of expression, that of "bringing something out that had been in"—in *mind*, that is (expressing = "pressing out")—but if any theory of artistic expression were to take senses of this sort as paradigmatic, it would thereby condemn itself to triviality.

On the other hand, if we were to say that a particular composition presented us with a poignant expression of grief, or of another that it offered a fulsome expression of joy, or that a third constituted an uplifting expression of consolation, we would be saying more than just that grief, joy and consolation constituted, respectively the subject matter of each of these works. To be sure, we would be saying at least that much; yet more importantly, these characterizations resonate with our *approval* of the works. We *warmed up* to each one in some way; each in its own way *stirred something* in us, and regardless how "negatively" we may describe the subject matter—grief, after all, is hardly a state of mind that any sane person actively seeks out—we will gladly return to such works again and again, over the course of our life. No one refers to any composition as "a poignant expression of grief" only to add "but I'm not much of one for poignant expressions of anything," or "but it just happens to leave *me* flat." No one speaks of a "fulsome expression of joy" then rounds off the thought with "that was as boring as could be." We might as well describe a person as "a model citizen, apart from a certain tendency frequently to commit acts of unspeakable violence against his neighbors."

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[1] "La face de la nature, n'est-elle pas expressive comme celle de l'homme?" From Victor Cousin, Du vrai, du beau et du bien, Paris: Didier, 1853, 167.

There are works that do purport to some emotional content, and yet for one reason or another they fail to win our approval. Such works as these, however, will not be faulted for their expressiveness; rather, we may deem them to be affected, or lacking in sincerity, or simply inept. We may say (giving the benefit of the doubt) "the composer *was aiming to* provide an expression of grief, but fell well short of the mark," or we may judge (more harshly) "the composer *wanted us to think* that the work consisted in an expression of grief," and yet we managed to see right through it. For whatever reason we may cite, any attribution of expressiveness will be withheld from works that don't really touch us. To be inexpressive, our language informs us, is to be artistically unsuccessful. People who, for whatever pathological reason, do not appreciate Bach, often speak of his music as "cold and inexpressive"; those who value him above all other composers (perhaps above all other artists!), find expressiveness glinting from even the murkiest corners of so many of his works. Those who find something to appreciate in Wagner tend to laud the intensity of his expression; those who find little of merit in his music will deem it to be cliche-ridden bathos, its expressive pretensions far outreaching its accomplishments.

Certainly some works are more subdued than others; some composers—for example, a post-Romantic like Satie, or a Stravinsky in his neo-Classicist phase—shy away from any kind of bombastic declamation that would be heard as hyper-emotional. Yet expressiveness is still to be found in many of their works. A roar or a growl may well be expressive, but so may a wink or a nod. One of the most devastating moments in all of American literature is this simple, "undramatic" exchange between Huck Finn and Aunt Sally:

> "We blowed out a cylinder-head."
> "Good gracious! Anybody hurt?'"
> "No'm. Killed a nigger."
> "Well, it's lucky; because sometimes people do get hurt." (Twain 1966: 291)

Rich and varied are the techniques through which expression may be accomplished, but any composer who seeks to *achieve in*expressiveness is best advised to have a supplementary source of income.

A Brief History of Expressionism

There is no neat, linear development in theories of musical expression that can be traced from the Renaissance to the present day. Many elements of later versions of expressionism can be found in this or that sixteenth- or seventeenth-century theory. There is, for example, no shortage of what could be termed *arousal* theories, which hold that music succeeds in accomplishing its expressive mission by arousing certain "appropriate" emotions in the listener, appropriate in that they coincide with emotions that could be said to belong to the music. Alongside these stand more mimetic explanations of expression, which stress a certain correspondence between the "surface" of a work and the emotional state it allegedly depicts. In this latter approach, the term "expression" appears quite interchangeable with terms such as "represent" or "imitate," as a melodic line could just as easily be said to express, represent, or even portray a certain feeling state (much in the insouciant manner that Descartes would run together terms such as "idea," sensation, and "perception"–terms that were to undergo much theoretic refinement in succeeding centuries). The *ut pictura poesis* doctrine, after all, was not under any obligation to confine itself to the visual and literary arts: it could just as easily have been *ut pictura sonoris*, or better yet, *ut cantata poesis*.

Despite this variety among early versions of expressionism, however, the theory did undergo a couple salient developments. First, there was the development of the Romantic outlook, a process which began to take shape in the late eighteenth century and grew in a long *crescendo* through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. Toward the middle of this last century, however, Romanticism's alliance with expressionism could be seen to launch, somewhat more abruptly, into a pronounced *diminuendo*, (although strains of the Romantic outlook are still audible today–and will remain so, I suspect, on whatever today it is that anyone happens to be reading this sentence).

It was Romanticism that forged a much stronger sense of "expression" than had previously been employed in aesthetic discourse, a sense that persists in the language we direct toward works of art and perhaps especially toward musical compositions, and it is the sense described above, in which "expressiveness" comes across clearly as a virtue or an achievement.

How is it, then, that a musical composition can be said to accomplish an act of expression? The approach which lies at the heart of Romanticism contends that we (listeners) feel just what the piece is said to express. A composer is moved, for whatever reasons, to embody certain emotions in the composition, and this composition then works upon the cognitive and imaginative powers of a listener to produce the feeling state that the composer desired to express. A work is then said to express emotion X because those who listen to it are moved to feel emotion X, just as the composer would have been prompted to creative activity by having felt emotion X. The motto Beethoven inscribed on the title page of his *Missa Solemnis* is often taken to be an exemplary utterance of this

conviction: "From the heart, may it go to the heart" (via the work, he might have added, if he had been doing theory).

Several decades following Beethoven's epigrammatic pronouncement, the great Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy developed an aesthetic theory in a work entitled *What is Art?* which captures this view, only with the added feature that the emotion expressed would be one *felt previously* by the artist. It would then be *rekindled* in the creative act, and *elicited* in an audience by a process he termed "infectiousness." He gives the example of a boy who had been frightened by a wolf and who then relates and recreates the experience before an audience:

He describes himself, his condition before the encounter, the surroundings, the wood, his own lightheartedness, and then the wolf's appearance, its movements, the distance between himself and the wolf, and so forth. All this, if only the boy when telling the story again experiences the feelings he had lived through, and infects the hearers and compels them to feel what he had experienced—is art.

The feelings with which the artist infects others may be most various—very strong or very weak, very important or very insignificant, very bad or very good. ... If only the spectators or auditors are infected by the feelings which the author has felt, it is art. (Tolstoy 1960: 50-51)

Hence, in the best of circumstances where the artistic process is at work, shared emotional experiences abound.

Approaches of this sort, which connect artist and audience at the emotional level, enjoyed considerable popularity for a time, but came ultimately under critical scrutiny, and much of this criticism has merit to it. (This is not to say that it is decisive, but it is surely not to be taken lightly.) Let us consider some of the main objections, first as they bear upon the emotional state of the artist, then upon that of the audience. In both cases, the realm of emotions is a treacherous one.

How, it is asked, can we possibly know *what* a composer felt, especially one who died a century or two before we were born? How might we set about to verify what these feelings were? Do we require, or can we hope to come across any biographical or anecdotal evidence that would successfully answer this question? In fact, even when composers are willing to speak about the creative process, we should be wary about accepting whatever they say at face value. Beethoven, when asked why his Opus 111 piano sonata had no third movement, replied simply that he "didn't have time to write one." Perhaps he knew that the second movement was sufficient to lay to rest any further attempts in that medium; in any case, why should we look for the straight, unvarnished truth in any pronouncement he may have made? When one Beatle or another was asked what

this song or that line meant, as they often were, we grew accustomed to expecting a tongue-in-cheek answer to follow. If any one of them were ever to give an earnest answer, the boy-crying-wolf principle would have made it difficult to determine which, and when. Is it not difficult, in any number of instances, to describe—or even to know!—what we ourselves are feeling at a given moment? What grounds do we have, then, for presuming to speak for someone else, at a considerable spatial, temporal and cultural remove from ourselves?

Furthermore, composers often have several works going at the same time, with each bespeaking a very different character; if they are invariably following emotional promptings, their lives would have to be veritable emotional kaleidoscopes! Perhaps Diderot's famous Actor's Paradox could be invoked here to help resolve this problem, but even if it were to, it would surely lend no support to the expressionist thesis. Diderot argued, with a host of charming examples, that the more an actor was carried away by emotions of the sort he was called upon to express, the poorer would be his performance; and conversely, the further he could remove himself from the emotions he was portraying, the greater would be the chance that his portrayal would succeed. And since musical composition and performance (the two, of course, coalescing in improvisation) are at least as intellectually demanding as acting is, perhaps "a cool head" is indeed a requisite. In short, it is contended that theories which depend on precising the emotional state(s) of a composer are difficult to sustain with any cogency.

Many of the above considerations apply to the emotional state of members of an audience, with even a few additional wrinkles. For where an audience is concerned, it is likely that we are speaking not of one individual but of many, and this can only compound the epistemic problems involved. What is more, we are called upon, not just to know what the various members of a group are feeling, but to impute a correlation between this collection of feelings and the one that gave rise to the music—the composer's. Given how individualized feelings are by nature, is this not a project that is doomed from the moment of its formulation?

As a consequence of this sort of criticism, which trickled out over a span of decades spreading across the middle of the last century, expressionism was simply abandoned by any number of thinkers; yet there were others who undertook a radical revision of the theory. "Expression" discourse, after all, had worked its way deep into the fabric of both technical and ordinary language, we seem to use it purposively and meaningfully: such considerations as these invite explanation. Let us look briefly at a couple noteworthy attempts at revisionism.

Suzanne Langer's "logical expression" theory

In her first major work on aesthetics, *Philosophy in a New Key*, Langer uttered the provocative contention that "music is not the cause or cure of feeling but its logical expression." (1948:176) The negative portion of this claim was supported by arguments similar to those sketched above—music as "cause" of feeling addressed the feelings supposedly aroused in a listener; as "cure," reference is made to the sense of release that the act of expression allegedly brought to the composer, the audience, or (ideally) both. The positive component was grounded in her claim that a variety of congruencies can be observed to exist between musical phenomena and emotional states, or, to use another of her terms of art, that musical phenomena and emotional states can and often do bear an *isomorphic* relationship to one another. Thus she judges:

> The tonal structures we call "music" bear a close logical similarity to the forms of human feeling—forms of growth and attenuation, flowing and stowing, conflict and resolution, speed, arrest, terrific excitement, calm, or subtle activation and dreamy lapses—not joy and sorrow, perhaps, but the poignancy of either and both—the greatness and brevity and eternal passing of everything vitally felt. Such is the pattern, or logical form, of sentience; and the pattern of music is that same form worked out in pure, measured sound and silence. Music is a tonal analogue of emotive life. (1953: 27)

When Langer speaks of a "logical expression" of feeling, it is clear that this expression need not go *from* any heart, nor *to* any heart: rather, it is *about* the heart, the heart that beats within all of us. The value of music would thus consist in the *enlightenment* it is capable of providing concerning that rich and complex area of human experience surrounding our emotional life. Listen and learn. What greater reward could we seek than that which accompanies a heightened self-knowledge?

Peter Kivy: resemblance and contour

Peter Kivy, in his book *The Corded Shell*, explores the concept of expression in music and reaches conclusions certain of which bear some similarity to those articulated by Langer. Yet his position is anything but a simple recapitulation of Langer's. For one thing, he aims to distance his view from the more rigid formalism implied in her terms "logical form," "logical expression," and "isomorphism." No explanation of musical expression can or should purport to the kind of scientific rigor that these notions suggest. Instead, he opts for a softer termi-

nology, appealing to "resemblance" and "contour" to cover much of the same ground. Certain music and certain emotional states can be said to bear a *resemblance* to one another, they share similar *contours;* and in contexts tacitly agreed upon by composer and listener, music employs these means to express various emotional states.

> We should note that on his account it is the music that does the expressing, not the composer. Still, he refuses to consider his approach to expression as a representation theory in disguise, because representation ... implies conscious intent on the part of the composer; and that, it seems to me, is lacking, more often than not. ... [I]n most cases, where music is expressive of some emotion, the composer more than likely had no intentions whatever of representing expressive behavior, nor, for that matter, need he even have intended his music to be expressive at all. (Kivy 1980: 64)

Yet composers' intentions aside, we still, he claims, recognize music to be expressive of certain emotional states. We must, therefore, be reading such expressiveness off the surface of the work itself.

The contour presented by a piece, though, is not the only factor determining its expressiveness: Kivy also stresses the role of *convention* (again, understood broadly and loosely) in achieving expression—"the customary association of certain musical features with certain emotive ones, quite apart from any structural analogy between them."(Kivy 1980: 77) Expressive "devices" such as chromaticism, the diminished triad, and major/minor modalities, as well as the religious "flavor" of organ music or the martial "feel" of trumpets, are all said to owe their effectiveness to conventional association. (And even if certain conventions are grounded in contour, or, as with the diminished triad, some syntactic feature that undergirds contour, still they have separated themselves off from their conditions of origin—much, perhaps, as "good bye" grew out of, then left behind, "God be with ye.")

To summarize quickly the central features detectable in Kivy's account of musical expression: (a) no special relationship between a work and its creator need exist; surely no feelings are to be imputed to the composer based on anything we hear in the music—the music is expressive (or not) on its own account. (b) What we (listeners) feel, or whether we feel anything at all, in our confrontation with music we term "expressive," is irrelevant to our apprehension of its expressive contour. We have, then, a perfectly emotionless account of how music expresses emotion. Curiously, almost ironically, this revised version of expressionism does find itself in agreement with a doctrine quite central to the most romanticized versions of the theory, namely, that the "face" of nature, of man,

of art, are all expressive in the same manner.[2] The critical difference lying behind this apparent moment of agreement, however, consists in this: while the earlier view such as Cousin's was designed to *affirm* that the divine consciousness permeated, and could be detected in every corner of nature, the latter day version aims to *deny* that human artifacts are any more expressive of our "inner life" than are the objects that comprise "brute nature."

Expressionism, it may be claimed, does live on in theories such as Langer's and Kivy's, but is it a life worth living? If theories could sign living wills, then expressionism's next-of-kin could well be contemplating pulling the plug on it. It is true that the realm of felt emotion is a treacherous one for any theoretician to deal with, for all the reasons enumerated above, and then some. But it is false to assert that we feel nothing in the face of certain compositions, or to claim that the emotions we do feel on hearing certain works are irrelevant to our valuing them, or to deny that these emotional experiences play a vital role in our determining such works to be expressive. And it is simply bad faith for any theoretician to treat as nonexistent that which resists neat formulation (as behaviorists do with the "inner life"; as latter-day psychoanalysts do with the unconscious—preferring to dissipate symptomatic behavior with drugs, and be done with the matter).

Langer herself, in *Philosophy in a New Key*, writes, with psychoanalytic (non-)explanations of art in mind:

> the Freudian interpretation, no matter how far it be carried, never offers even the rudest criterion of *artistic* excellence. It may explain why a poem was written, why it is popular, what human features it hides behind its fanciful imagery. ... But *it makes no distinction between good and bad art*. The features to which it attributes the importance and significance of a great masterpiece may all be found just as well in an obscure work of some quite incompetent painter or poet. (1948: 176)

It is my conviction that emotionless accounts of emotion in music, such as hers and Kivy's, easily fall victim to that same line of criticism. One has the impression that with one or two lessons in contour and convention, or in correlating forms of sentience with musical gestures, a *Klingon* could make reasonably well-informed judgments about the expressive content of musical compositions emerging from the pens of nineteenth-century German composers. All a neophyte composer would have to think is: "droopy melody, sluggish tempo, minor key—I've mastered the expression of sadness. Tomorrow let's master joy!" But

"intellectualist" accounts of expression, that do not reach beyond an explanation of expressive content in order to take on the more critical dimension of expressiveness, condemn themselves to insignificance. (And to think, Langer had made it her project to explain *significant form*!) As Rudolf Arnheim puts it, "the dynamic quality of perceptual experiences accounts ... for the difference between mere intellectual information received indirectly through the eyes [or ears] and the direct reverberation within us of the forces we experience in the objects we see [and hear]." (1977: 213)[3]

Music as Cause and Cure

The power of music to evoke emotions is signaled in theories as old as theory itself: Plato would have excluded the use of certain musical modes from his ideal republic and encouraged others, following the effect each had on one's emotional and moral development. Music is used to incite men to battle, to inspire religious sentiment, to charm a lover—these feats are not accomplished with a little contour and a lot of convention; nor do soldiers and zealots seek verification of the congruence between certain modes of human feeling and the musical object exhibited before them, prior to forging a commitment to their cause! History and everyday life offer too much confirmation of the evocative power of music simply to shrug off such experiences.

Within my own experience, I once had no choice but to leave a concert at intermission, after Beethoven's Opus 111 piano sonata, because the performance of that awesome work had shattered and reassembled me in such a way that the remainder of the program (was it Liszt and Debussy? Small matter) would have presented an unthinkable affront to my emotional state. A wordless walk along the Seine was all I could manage for the rest of the night. I have sat through a four hour performance of the St. Matthew's Passion (which finished at 1 AM, due to the late arrival of the chorus), and been so emotionally uplifted by it all that I could easily have listened to the entire work again, if the performers themselves had felt equal to the task. A simple Chopin prelude (say, Opus 28, B minor, Eb minor; any of several others), heard in the morning, can dictate the emotional tone of the entire rest of my day. I may indeed be more sensitive in this domain than a great many others, but there are still many others who are more

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[2] Kivy, *Corded Shell*, 30.

[3] Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception*. This discussion of the relation between Gestalt theory and the appreciation of art and music leans heavily on my treatment of that issue in *Aesthetics*, Armonk, London: M.E. Sharpe, 1998, 67-79.

sensitive even than I. Certainly I feel myself to be neither unique nor radically eccentric; for this reason I feel comfortable speaking of "we" and "us," for there are enough of "us" out there to make generalization meaningful. And it is "we," after all, who labor to keep this musical tradition alive.

However much some theorists may wish to distance themselves from the fact, the reality of our emotional response to certain musical compositions seems beyond question. Now interestingly, the experiences that I cited from my own past happen to involve works which I hold in the highest esteem—at the worldly edge of reverence. If my own emotional responses were to be irrelevant to my evaluative tendencies, or at cross currents with them, would I not observe correlations of a different sort, or no correlations at all? This is not to claim that "the music made me feel what the composer felt, what he wanted to express, and what he wanted me to feel," but it stands a lot closer to that than to saying "feelings have no place in the phenomenon of music appreciation."

Actually if we scrutinize our emotional state when we have been moved by a musical work—even when we have been *shaken*—we will find one curious fact emerging: there is a definite, positive element to the overall experience, almost one of joy. Even when what may be described as the expressive contour of a piece is something along the lines of psychological pain, our general experience is colored by these positive overtones. Music lovers are not masochists: Bach's "Es ist vollbracht" aria (from the *St. John Passion*), bemoaning Christ's death, but not yet celebrating the fulfillment of his mission (this follows soon thereafter), in its expression of deep despair, succeeds in lifting us above despair. Is it that beauty can never leave us embittered? Obviously the emotional mechanics at work in a case such as this are murky and complex. Equally obviously, however, great music of this sort, in addition to being *moving*, is invariably *uplifting*. How pallid would be an analysis of "Es ist vollbracht" that contented itself with noting "'downward' sloping melodic line, halting rhythmic formula [contour]; minor mode [convention]," and thought that it had thereby given an exhaustive account of the expressive content of that musical gem! It is curious that at one point Kivy claims:

> There must be some new combination of the latest results in psychology, physiology, and the psychology of music to show how sounds in general, and musical sounds in particular, interact with the human organism to produce emotional reactions of the appropriate kind. Perhaps there may be, but I do not know about them; and I think a little preliminary reflection on the possibility suggests that this is a blind alley. (Kivy 1980: 30)

Offhand I can see no overwhelming reason to prefer any "new" account over an "old" one, especially if the old one can boast some measure of cogency. After all, today's new accounts *become* tomorrow's old accounts. Nor would any alliance with physiology be all that compelling, since "today" it is *neuro*physiology that holds the trump cards (and who knows what the morrow will bring?). Philosophy, unfortunately, cannot claim to be immune to faddishness. What I offer here is a blend of a couple approaches to the correlation between music and emotion. The first, which is rooted in the Gestalt theory of cognition, aims to account for the emotional responses music can elicit from us; the second, involving elements from theories such as Kivy's and Langer's, speaks to what we tend to describe as the emotional content of a work. Let us look.

Gestalt Theory in Art

Gestalt theory allows for an intriguing link between our perception of visual and auditory patterning and our emotions. Rudolf Arnheim (quoted above, 7), explores the link with respect to visual creations in books such as *Art and Visual Perception*,[4] and *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*. The auditory dimension has been developed by Leonard Meyer, most extensively in *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (1956) but also in *Music, the Arts, and Ideas* (1967). Since Gestalt theory itself, in its formulation and development, depended heavily on analyses of our visual perceptual experience, its basic concepts needed to be adjusted some to be made applicable to the musical domain. This, along with the introduction of a theory of emotional response, constituted Meyer's principal contribution. Let us look first at the basic tenets of the Gestalt theorists, then at how they can be adapted to aesthetic and musical experience.

The Gestalt school made its appearance in the 1920s, with its leading proponents being Wolfgang Köhler, Kurt Koffka, and Max Wertheimer. The fundamental dictum of the theory has it that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This contention has both a negative and a positive dimension. Negatively, it aims to deny that an exhaustive account of our perceptual experience can be given by making reference only to our passive reception of sensation—"something more" is involved. Positively, it stresses, as that something more, the active involvement of mind in the constituting of experience: the word "Gestalt" in

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[4] This, and the following four principles cited in italics, appear in: Edwin G. Boring, *Sensation and Perception in the History of Experimental Psychology*, New York: Appleton Century, 1942, 252-54.

German means "form" or "shape," hence the theory aims to reveal something of the shaping forces at work in the act of perception—"the general dynamics of the formation of form."[5]

It is in this active involvement of the mind with the data of sensation that emotions may (or may not) be aroused. The theory itself, in the hands of the above mentioned theoreticians, offered an account of how we come to see the world as we see it. Consider some of its basic laws:

Good and poor forms. A good form is well articulated, and as such tends to impress itself upon the observer, to persist and recur. A circle is a good form.

Strong and weak forms. A strong form coheres and resists disintegration by analysis into parts or by fusion with another form.

Note that "good" and "strong" here simply indicate a certain fundamental habit of mind—they are not to be taken to be aesthetically loaded terms (though their aesthetic relevance will soon be brought out). Good forms and strong forms are forms which, let us say, set the mind's cognitive energies at rest. That mind has a tendency to organize its sensory data in a manner that will leave it in repose is one of the basic tenets of Gestalt theory.

Proper form. A proper form tends to preserve its proper shape, size and color.

"Proper" refers not so much to the shape or color a form actually possesses, but to that which is "assigned to it" or "impressed upon it." That is, a form is proper when the shaping powers of the mind have worked upon it—squared it up, rounded it off, smoothed it out—brought it into line, as far as possible, with the demands of cognition.

Symmetry of form. A form tends toward symmetry, balance, and proportion.

Symmetry, balance, and proportion are forms that put the mind at rest. They are to perception what certitude is to inquiry. Once we perceive the symmetry of an object, we are ready to move on to the next object.[6]

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[5] Though the Gestalt approach clearly has its roots in the transcendental philosophy of Immanuel Kant, it can undoubtedly be accommodated to today's naturalistic tendencies, especially that tendency to explain everything in terms of natural selection. If, for example, one had failed to see a sabre-toothed tiger as something other than a tawny patch in the visual field, one wouldn't have been around to do much more cognizing. Such an entity required focus, it had to be separated off from its background, brought to the center of the visual field, streamlined, and this had to be done quickly. These dispositions of mind, then, which came to have profound aesthetic importance, can easily be explained in a most pragmatic manner (though I do not insist on the explanation).

[6] It is sad, but undoubtedly true, that if Mozart had been our contemporary, he would have been swept off into some Burbank studio when he was eighteen, would have found

Although the factor of perceptual repose is central to Gestalt theory, it is easy to observe that the aesthetic state of mind is anything but a restful one. As Arnheim observes, "just as the emphasis of living is on directed activity, not on empty repose, so the emphasis of the work of art is not on balance, harmony, unity, but on a pattern of directed forces that are being balanced, ordered, unified." (1954: 21)

Vincent van Gogh's celebrated *Starry Night*, for example, is a turbulent work: the moon doesn't just sit motionless in the sky (in the upper right corner of the canvas), it shimmers and vibrates there; the stars don't sparkle, they swirl and careen, as if swept along by the clouds; a cypress writhes from the lower left foreground toward the sky. Only the little church in the valley (at the lower right center) seems at rest, at peace—all else is in a maddening flux. None of these elements stands anywhere near the geometric *or* the visual center of the painting, but each pulls our attention this way then that across the center. We feel where these forces lead, but the painting simply does not allow our consciousness to come to rest there. In this manner does a work such as *Starry Night* play upon—prey upon—our nativistic tendencies to order, regularize, round off, simplify the visual field. Its formal structure initiates a visual struggle and yet inhibits any ultimate, satisfactory resolution to this struggle. Still, it offers the promise of such resolution, and it makes this offer with a strength that is sufficient to sustain indefinitely our interest and reward our efforts at rendering it (cognitively) intelligible.

It is in this interplay of visual forces that our emotions are provoked. In Meyer's words, "emotion or affect is aroused when a tendency to respond is arrested or inhibited." (1956: 14) An emotional response may arise, that is, when events deviate from expected patterns and we lose control over our surroundings. This can happen while watching a football game, driving on an expressway, or viewing a painting. Unlike the football game or the expressway ride, however, the painting both stimulates and controls our response—holding it in place, so to speak, while leading us to place a certain interpretation on the feelings thus aroused. A perfectly symmetrical painting (of which there are very few in museums, for obvious reasons) takes us on no particular visual adventure and consequently gives rise to no cognitively based emotional response. We look at it, and move on to the next work unmoved. Let us now consider how these factors—

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his beachfront home at Malibu by the time he was twenty two, and would have passed on to us nothing of the prodigious musical oeuvre that we now possess and delight in. On the bright side, at least he would have lived on in artistic mediocrity well beyond the age of 35.

the interplay between a perceived object, our cognitive faculties, and our emotions—translate over into the musical domain.

Music and Gestalt Theory

The essentially temporal nature of music calls for a reinterpretation of the laws of pattern perception, if Gestalt theory is to be applied effectively to the musical domain. The distinctions between strong and weak forms, good and poor forms and the like must be drawn in a manner that incorporates this additional dimension. And along with time must go memory—that peculiar power of mind that allows us to retain a sense of the past and project it into the future. Still, let us not forget that the normative terms "good," "poor," "weak," and so on do not qualify the musical work any more than the visual object. Strong or good forms in and of themselves do not make for strong or good compositions; indeed weakness and poverty of form are vital to producing effective, affective music. "[S]ome of the greatest music is great precisely because the composer has not feared to let his music tremble on the brink of chaos, thus inspiring the listener's awe, apprehension, and anxiety and, at the same time, exciting his emotions and his intellect." (Meyer 1956: 161)

In a process that unfolds in time, continuation becomes a key element. Good continuation implies that "a shape or pattern will, other things being equal, tend to be continued in its initial mode of operation."(Meyer 1956: 92) But continuation is in fact a mental process initiated by a certain stimulus: "it is this mental process which, following the mental line of least resistance, tends to be perpetuated and continued." (Meyer 1956: 92) Disturbing the continuation of a musical process, either by interposing gaps of one sort or another or by initiating unimplied processes, is thus necessary to keeping the music alive. This concept supplies some very rough but nevertheless useful parameters for gauging the effectiveness of a composition. At one end of the continuum of good continuation would stand music that *never* went where we expected it to go. Such music would not sustain our interest for long—it may well irritate us at first, or even bemuse us for a time, but ultimately it will only bore us. At the other end of the continuum we would find music that never deviated from our expectations that always fell into line with our desire for good continuation. This music also would quickly benumb us, not, in this case, for posing insurmountable challenges, but for failing to challenge our cognitive dispositions sufficiently, thus leading to a slackening in attentiveness. The dynamic interplay between our listening dispositions, attuned to forming a certain set of expectations, and the

musical work that, when interestingly constructed, deviates from these expectations—though never so much as to discourage the formation of further expectations—is how our positive experience of music might best be characterized.

Expectations, or tendencies to respond, can be effectively interrupted in a variety of ways. In the sequence of tones that constitutes a melody, for example, our tendency is to listen for solid, "closed" shapes, or, when melodic gaps of a fourth or more do occur, that they be "filled in" straightaway by stepwise, contrary melodic motion. Thus the leap of a minor sixth, such as occurs in the opening phrase of the "Lacrimosa" in Mozart's *Requiem*, creates a disturbingly hollow feeling in us; but Mozart does not straightaway capitulate to our need for solidity. Instead, he briefly feigns such contrary motion, only to repeat the original leap, thereby augmenting our uneasiness. The melody is then made to rise through a long series of steps, in which the bass line pulls down and away, so as to create yet another gap that begs to be filled in, an entreaty that is only gratified after a considerable time.

Harmonic relationships also create certain expectations in us. The very study of harmony, in fact, is grounded in a certain set of loosely defined probabilities, specifying, for example, that the triad built on the fifth tone of the scale precedes the tonic regularly; that built on the fourth does so somewhat less often; the third considerably less often, etc. Where there are probabilities, there are likely to be expectations, and consequently there are ample occasions to deviate from expected patterns.

Rhythms, too, set up patterns of expectation that permit of effective (and affective) deviation. A one-dimensional, mechanical pounding can become irritating, in the absence of variations among the other parameters (or in the complete absence of other parameters—the jackhammer effect), but a shift, say, from a double meter to a triple meter can take us pleasantly by surprise, as can an abrupt halt followed by a change of tempo, or the simultaneous occurrence of strict and loose rhythmic impulses. Chopin, a master at this latter technique, observed "the singing hand [the one carrying the melody in a piano piece] may deviate from strict time, but the accompanying hand must keep time." (Meyer 1956: 200)

For beings like ourselves, constituted so as to "keep the world centered in front of us," and to keep it simple enough to be readily comprehended, the multifarious disruptions a skilled composer can inflict on our urge for order and completeness are capable of eliciting strong emotional responses from us. Still, for this emotional experience to be a positive one, order must in the end win out (although this victory must not come easily), and we must always maintain faith

that the composer has sufficient integrity and skill to be willing and able to lead us from obscurity to light.

Expressive Content

Having our emotions agitated, activated, may be a necessary condition for us to value a work—to find it expressive—but such expressiveness normally combines with a sense, sometimes vague, sometimes very definite, that there is *something being expressed*. This something is what we can refer to as the *content* of a piece. It is at this point that considerations such as Kivy's "contour and convention" can be invoked, as various ethetic elements fuse with the evocative nature of a work, supplying color to the emotions aroused. Color, of course is a metaphoric term, as are most of the terms used to capture this side of the musical process: melodies don't really rise and fall—strings or columns of air vibrate more or less rapidly; changes in speed (*accelerando, diminuendo*) are really changes in the frequency of occurrence of notes; harmonic motion can not involve real motion, since harmonies are not entities in space; nor can a tone bear a color, since it is not a surface. Just the same, the metaphorical is at least as essential to language as the literal, and we undeniably understand one another when we employ these terms, and many others like them.

What I wish to suggest here is an adjustment to the age old theory that the music makes us feel what the composer intended to express. I have agreed that music, when effective, does make us feel. Yet this feeling is invariably and essentially a response to the music itself. A funeral march, that is, heard at a symphonic performance, while it may well produce a strong emotional response in us, will produce a radically different response from any we would undergo in the presence of the corpse of a loved one. Even that notorious bumpkin (himself a fictional character, no doubt) who leapt onto the stage to prevent Othello from killing Desdemona, would undergo no such temptation while listening to the overture to Othello. Music is a realm unto itself. But in this realm, the factors of tempo, key, timbre, harmony, etc. all collaborate to impart a certain quality to the music—one that mingles with our own subjectivity in a manner that leads us to speak of the *emotional tone* of a piece. The emotion, however, is ours, even though the tone may belong to the music. I am claiming, then that it is from the *fusion* of our emotional response to a work with the ethetic character such a work possesses—a fusion which apparently occurs in us at the imaginative level—that the *con*fusion about the mechanics of expression arose. Both theoretical elements—the arousal of emotion and the intimation of some emotional

content—are requisite for any adequate explanation. To replant Kant's famous epistemological dictum in aesthetic soil, arousal theories that ignore content are blind, while content-based theories that ignore emotional response are empty.

Expression and Communication

But do composers express emotions? Much aesthetic theory during the latter half of the twentieth century has employed arguments designed to hold the expressive object utterly apart from the (potentially) expressive act. Intentionality has been too thorny an issue for many theorists to confront: recall Kivy's statement, cited earlier, in which he asserts that "conscious intent on the part of the composer, ... it seems to me, is lacking, more often than not. ... [I]n most cases, where music is expressive of some emotion, the composer more than likely had no intentions whatever of representing expressive behavior." (1980: 64) This attitude, I must say, I find astonishing. Perhaps it arises out of a too serious consideration of the exigencies of our own Imperial Entertainment Industry, where artistic insincerity and audience manipulation are the order of the day, every day. But (don't tell this to Hollywood, but) Hollywood has not always been king, and there have been composers and musicians who actually followed their own muse regardless whether doing so brought them fabulous wealth.[7]

We have felt that music moves us; we have suggested how it accomplishes this; and we have granted that there are important correlations between the musical work and the emotional state of which it could be said to be expressive. Now what would be almost miraculous is that a work such as Chopin's B minor prelude should not only embody—as it does, gently but unmistakably—a sense of unfulfilled longing, but that it should do so *completely by accident*: independent, that is to say, of any intentions the composer may have had in creating it. And it would be a further miracle that I, hearing it more than a century and a half after it was written, should find my way to the emotional significance of this work *completely by accident*. If responsible explanation requires us to hold the miraculous at bay until all other more naturalistic attempts at explanation fail, then it would be utterly irresponsible on our part to deny (a) the work has a certain emotional significance, (b) I detect this significance, (c) it is there because Chopin *put* it there, and (d) I detect it because in some respect I understand Chopin's musical language.

William Wimsatt, Jr. and Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy," *The Sewanee Review* 54, no. 3, 1946, 468-86.

Did Chopin himself feel, at the time he was composing this work, a sense of unfulfilled longing? Probably he didn't—but the sentiment was surely known to him, and to some extent perhaps the artistic process did require him to allow a little of this sentiment to creep in (though not so much as to prevent him from finishing off the piece!). To consider another example, in Bach's aria "Ach, mein Sinn / Wo willt du endlich hin" from the *St. John Passion*, we hear the raving of Peter, at his wit's end for having thrice denied his association with Jesus only hours after he swore he would never do such a thing. Surely Bach was never guilty of this particular act of betrayal; but just as surely, he knew, as we all do, what guilt feels like, and his special genius at the art of composition enabled him to find a musical embodiment of this feeling—indeed, has senselessness ever been more effectively portrayed before the senses than it has here? There are no accidents involved in a case such as this—just an earnest endeavor on the part of an utter genius to bring home to us, through the musical medium, the emotional complex surrounding betrayal. And, 250 years later, it still works.

Is there sincerity in the need Bach seems to have felt to portray this emotion to us, or was he just "doing his job"—piecing together a Sunday service in order to put bread on the table? It is curious that some thinkers should seek an answer to this question outside the music itself, as if a casual comment or a disrespectful remark dropped in passing should or could speak more loudly than the music itself. When a genius such as Bach devotes his entire life to his art, it is his art which speaks loudest in his behalf; either the details of his life are irrelevant to his art, or his art illuminates the details of his life, not vice versa. Anti-intentionalists, from Wimsatt and Beardsley on down,[7] were entirely correct in questioning the relevance of "biographical data" as a tool to understanding the meaning of particular art works. Their error lay in believing that they had thereby ruled out intentionality as a relevant factor in our responses to and evaluations of such works. What is the case is that when we hear music, we are hearing the spirit behind the music: eliminating the intentional factor from our listening experience is tantamount to exchanging heartfelt confidences with a robot.

Consider again the "Lacrimosa" from Mozart's *Requiem*: is it Mozart's own, or was it the creation of Süssmayr, his student, in whose hand most of the notes on the original score were written? If penmanship is to be the final arbiter, then Süssmayr wins out; however, one need only *listen* to the music in order to hear that it is one of the most profound musical utterances of all time—an incredible blend of power and simplicity. Now let us ask: of the two people in the room as Mozart lay dying, which one had a history of producing compositions of majes-

tic dimensions? What is Süssmayr's musical legacy? Ultimately, the work itself proclaims its authorship, regardless in whose hand the final draft appears.

To remove the human factor from art is to eliminate art, just as surely as to allow the intrusion of the human factor into nature destroys nature. But in this regard, art is not all that different from any number of other interpersonal interchanges. All manner of people express all manner of thoughts and feelings in all manner of ways. Few would find any discomfort in assenting to this claim. To deny it, however, would more or less involve recommending that the word "express" be removed from our vocabulary. There seems to be no overwhelming reason to accede to such a recommendation. And yet if Joe Dull can succeed from time to time in expressing himself—perhaps in words, perhaps in deeds—why should we feel any reluctance to grant that a composer skilled in the art of assembling musical sounds can, through this medium, successfully express a particular sentiment?

Can we always form a clear impression of just what is being expressed in a particular piece? Well, why should we? Are we always crystal clear about what even friends and colleagues express on a regular basis? Just because the sense of someone's remarks may at times elude us does not imply that we should abandon the notion of sense. The better the composer, the clearer the expression; indeed these words of John Dewey ring loudly in this context: "In the end, works of art are the only unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience." (1958: 105)

And it is in the realization of this communicative act that music, by means of its unique set of expressive tools, fulfills its loftiest aspirations.

7

Expression in Dance

Julie Van Camp

Of all the arts, dance would seem to have the most natural expressiveness, as it uses the entire human body itself. We should not need to worry about metaphorical or hypothetical or symbolic expression. The body itself, the instrument of dance, really does express a range of human emotions and attitudes in ordinary life.

But far from simplifying our understanding of expression, this unique situation raises questions unlike any other artform. What is the difference between the expression of an emotion by a person in an artwork in dance and the expression of an emotion by a person in non-art, "everyday life" situations?[1] Do the expressions in the artwork have a special presence or symbolism or universality that we do not experience when the identical bodily movements are completed by a person in ordinary life?

If we understand what it means for a person to express an emotion, do we necessarily understand how that emotion is expressed in a work of art, using the human body? Is the "same" emotion being expressed? Or is an abstraction or symbol of that emotion being expressed?

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[1] Philosopher Van Meter Ames argued that "Expression is aesthetic when fused with form," thus distinguishing expression in ordinary life which "may lack form," from aesthetic expressions. "Expression and Aesthetic Expression," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism (JAAC)* 6:2 (December 1947), 172-179, 172-3. Although he does not discuss dance specifically, these insights give us a starting point for distinguishing the human body of everyday life as it expresses emotion from the human body-as-dance-instrument with such expressions. We might then ask, what would count as the "form" that is distinctive in this art. In this regard, Ames cites the suggestions of Louis Arnaud Reid, who says that "aesthetic expressions" are "finer, subtler, more accurate, less literal and more imaginative." Quoting from Louis Arnaud Reid, *A Study in Aesthetics*, New York: Macmillan, 1931, 50.

If not performing as a character in a dramatic work, can a dancer still express emotional content in a way different from ordinary expression? If performing as a non-representational body, moving in space, can a dancer still express something, and is it different from ordinary life activities?

What does it mean to be "successful" in expressing emotions?[2] Is the key test the satisfaction of the dancer? Or the satisfaction of the audience in understanding the emotion communicated? If we assume that the artist will know when this success happens, could this be delusional self-satisfaction, or is there an objective measure of such success?

How does expression in dance compare with expression in other artforms, especially performing arts which use the human body as an instrument, such as theater or vocal music?

These puzzles have been addressed by philosophers, dancers, critics, and dance theorists, often with widely varying conclusions. I first review the range of proposals which have been offered to explain expression in dance. I then propose a pragmatist approach to address seemingly irreconcilable positions in various "dance worlds."

Although philosophers historically paid little attention to dance among the arts, some early thinkers, such as Lucian, identified expression of ideas and sentiments as an element of dance, not merely the imitation of reality that Plato and Aristotle promoted.[3] Hegel, in a brief consideration of dance, suggested that dance be evaluated for "... its ability to express mind or spirit." (Carter 1998: 23) But the view that expression of emotions and feelings is the central goal of dance emerged only in the twentieth century. (Carter, 24)

Havelock Ellis, writing in 1923, shared the view that expression by humans is the central core of dance. "The art of dancing stands at the source of all the arts that express themselves first in the human person." (1923: 34) For Ellis, this expressiveness can be found in our religious and spiritual lives throughout history and expressiveness in dance was a natural outgrowth of these other activi-

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[2] R. G. Collingwood addressed expression in all the arts, claiming that only when an artist *successfully* expressed emotions would the work constitute an "aesthetic emotion." See the discussion of this issue for the arts in general in Douglas R. Anderson and Carl R. Hausman, "The Role of Aesthetic Emotion in R.G. Collingwood's Conception of Creative Activity," *JAAC* 50:4 (Autumn 1992), 299-305.
[3] See Curtis Carter's discussion of Lucian from the Hellenistic period. "Western Dance Aesthetics," *International Encyclopedia of Dance*, Vol. I, ed. Selma Jeanne Cohen, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, 20.

ties. But, as with many early theorists, he mentions a "symbolic significance" (63) for expression in dance, but never develops what that might mean.

Theodore Meyer Greene, writing in 1947, also stressed the expressiveness of ordinary human movement as the basis for the expressiveness in dance as art. (1947: 63) For Greene, expression can include both "emotions and conative attitudes," (67) and an even broader notion of "artistically expressive." (132) Like dancers and critics of this era, he placed expressiveness at the center of what is special about dance as an artform,[4] but he does not address just what it means to be expressive, whether the dancer must actually experience the emotions and attitudes expressed, or whether the audience must recognize those emotions and attitudes.

In modern dance over the past century, expression of natural human feelings has often been a priority, a way of breaking away from formalized languages of classical ballet. (Gilbert, 107) But what counts as "natural" is not immediately obvious, except perhaps as a visual similarity to non-dance movement. Why is this "natural" movement preferred? Is this considered more expressive of genuine or authentic human feelings and experiences? Is this a test of a feeling of "completeness" or "rightness"? Is this a priority for mind or soul over mere body and a belief that "natural" expression would be more accurate in externalizing these internal states, as might be inferred from the work of the early dance pioneer, Isadora Duncan? (Gilbert, 108)

Another modern dance pioneer, Rudolf von Laban, preferred "natural" movement, as he believed it made dance "teleological instead of mechanical." (Gilbert, 111) Laban was one of a school of German choreographers typically characterized as "expressionist." As with the earliest American modern dance pioneers, they believed dance should express true inner emotions of the dancers, and that the emotions should reflect a unity of persons and nature.[5]

Philosopher Susanne K. Langer was a leading proponent of the expressiveness of dance,[6] and has been widely read by dance students in the last half century, especially given the paucity of attention to dance by most philosophers of art. She urged that works of art be understood as "expressions of human feeling in a sensuous form." (Bufford 1972: 9-20) All art is expressive, not merely in portraying our inner emotional life, but also, in structuring through symbolic forms, our understanding of our external reality.[7] The long-standing problem with her work has been developing a precise understanding of her notion of "symbol."

In contrast to these early theorists, philosopher Graham McFee has argued that expression in dance is best understood in the context of expression of all the arts, and that it is a mistake to try to understand it as most like expression of ordinary human movement in a non-art context. (1992: 242-59)

Because dance played such a minimal role in the work of philosophers of art until recent years, much of the early thought was developed by philosophically inclined dance critics and historians. Dance theorists from centuries ago highlighted the special expressive nature of dance. The French writer Jean-Georges Noverre, in the eighteenth century, said of dance movement, "... when feeling and expression do not contribute their powers sufficiently to affect and interest me, I admire the skill of the human machine, ... but it leaves me unmoved. ..."[8] These observations anticipate claims that one test of successful expression in dance is the impact on the observer.

John Martin, long-time dance critic for the *New York Times* and cheerleader for modern dance pioneers, recognized the central role of the expression of human emotions in dance. He characterized movement as "... a medium for the transference of an aesthetic and emotional concept from the consciousness of one individual to that of another." ((1933) 1983: 23-28) As observed by noted dance historian Selma Jeanne Cohen, for Martin,

Dance is an art of communication only when it grows out of human experience, when individual movements are derived from individual emotions. The dance deals with feelings that can be represented neither by words nor by a superimposed system of motion. (Cohen 1950: 111-18; Martin 1946: 105)

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[4] *E.g.*, he claims that "The final purpose of every serious dance ... is to offer a new and vital interpretation of some aspect of man's inner emotional experience and of his generic emotive-conative responses to his complex environment." *Ibid.*, p. 341.

[5] See Evelyn Dorr, "Rudolf von Laban: The 'Founding Father' of Expressionist Dance," *Dance Chronicle* 26:1 (2003), 1-29; Dianne S. Howe, *Individuality and Expression: The Aesthetics of the New German Dance, 1908-1936*, New York: Peter Lang, 1996.

[6] Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953, esp. Ch. 11, "Virtual Powers"; *Problems of Art*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957, esp. Ch. 1, "The Dynamic Image: Some Philosophical Reflections on Dance."

[7] Richard Courtney, "On Langer's Dramatic Illusion," *JAAC* 29:1 (Autumn, 1970), 11-20, 12, citing Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, Cambridge, MA, 1942, 68, and *Feeling and Form*, 32-50.

[8] Quoted in Katharine Everett Gilbert, "Mind and Medium in the Modern Dance," *JAAC*, 1:1 (Spring 1941), 106-129, 107. From Jean-Georges Noverre, *Letters on the Imitative Arts in General and on the Dance in Particular*, translated and published by C. W. Beaumont, London, 1930, 19-20.

But Martin also believed that dance expressed something broader than emotion, "things that transcended reason," and which could not be talked about in words. ((1933) 1965: 9)

Although a practicing dance critic was not expected to pursue the philosophical nuance we might expect today, his insights shape issues we still confront. Is expression "best" or "most effective" when it is somehow "natural" expression of normal human emotions? If dance is about natural emotional expression, what distinguishes the expression in dance, the art form, from the expression of human beings in their normal non-art lives? Exactly what is being expressed in an expressive dance? Must the dancer actually experience the emotion being expressed to be effective? Is it more important for the dancer to be a good actor in presenting the appearance of expression of those emotions?

Cohen seems to defend the position that expressiveness is an important element of all dance, but not the "essence" of dance.

The dance as a whole has an expressive quality, but this quality does not account for all its parts. It cannot, because its movements are designed for a purpose beyond expressiveness. (Cohen 1962: 19-26)

She also understands expressiveness broadly to include more than emotion, but also "meaning." She does not intend "meaning" in the way that a discursive sentence would have meaning. Rather, the dance expresses either the "quality of character" of the person or emotion. (Cohen, 21)

She offers helpful insights into the difference between the expressiveness of a dance and the expressiveness of a person in ordinary, non-art life. Mainly, these differences have to do with the stylistic and exaggerated characteristics that are the hallmark of choreography—adding "a more definitely perceivable shape in space," or enhanced "dynamics" or enhancement of the "sign" communicating ideas. She also explains expression in plotless works as expressing emotion "in their attitude toward the movement," rather than in "the relations of the dancers" that we find in dramatic works. (24)

Can dancers really express more than emotion—intellectual content? Symbols? Discursive content? Martin and Cohen seemed to think so, as does Roger Scruton, who has argued that art can express "thought, attitude, character, in fact, anything that can be expressed at all." (Scruton 1982: 30; Barwell 1986: 175) Romanticists, in contrast, he notes, limit expression more narrowly to expression of "emotions, moods, and feelings." (Barwell, 175)

Can dance movement express thinking and ideas that could otherwise be verbalized? Maxine Sheets-Johnstone has argued that the movement can be the thinking itself, at least in improvisation. She does not mean only that one might have "an image or an inclination" prior to moving or simultaneously with that movement, but that the act of movement itself should be considered the thinking. (1981: 401) It is not clear that non-verbal communication, whether of this more phenomenological sort or other approaches, is what most would understand a paradigmatic sense of "expression." Indeed, it might be broadening the concept beyond what would assist us in understanding any sense of "expression."

Etienne Gilson also stressed the non-verbal intellectual activity of dancing: "The born dancer thinks with his body the way he dances with his mind." (1966-41) But he considers "expression" only in the sense of mimicry, "... the art of expressing thoughts through gestures," (197) and does not consider emotional expression, as did other theorists.

A few years earlier, a choreographer writing under the direction of philosopher Rudolf Arnheim, asked how her work could "express a meaning"? (Jaffe 1954: 518) One of her examples was expression of "wonder," (Jaffe, 521) which has both an emotional and a cognitive connotation. She uses as a test for her work that "it seemed 'right' to make it in that particular way," the sort of satisfaction that an artist would feel if a successful aesthetic emotion had been achieved with the expression.

Years later, post-modern choreographers used exactly the ordinary movements of life by non-dancers as part of their works, thus challenging this approach to understanding what makes dance expression what it is. Philosopher Noël Carroll observes that expressiveness had been "... taken as a *sine qua non* of dance by many academic theoreticians and critics," but argues that much post-modern dance is overtly "non-expressive or even anti-expressive." Carroll notes a variety of things which theorists and critics have thought dance could "express." A narrower sense of expression was limited to emotions or some "anthropomorphic quality" such as "wit, charm, majesty, aloofness, sentimentality, generosity," which was metaphorically portrayed. (Carroll 1981: 97) A broader sense of expression, he observed, was communication of "... ideas as well as feelings and other anthropomorphic qualities." (98) Some post-moderns, he argues, have succeeded in eliminating expression in the narrower sense, but not in the broader sense of "ideas." (99)

It should also be noted that what is most interesting about such post-modern works is precisely their overt rejection of earlier, more traditional views of the "specialness" of dance. In other words, their content was directly parasitic on the existence of these earlier notions of expression. Their innovations furthered the continuing dialogue in dance about the appropriate role of expression, even as they sought to jettison it.

Another important contemporary analysis by Mary Sirridge and Adina Armelagos notes the dominance of expression theory in explaining dance, at least in the twentieth century. But they reject classical expression theory, which said that the dancer expresses actual emotions they are experiencing. (Sirridge and Armelagos 1977: 15) They also reject a "weakened or modified" account of expression, in which "the dance expresses a feeling or emotion, but need not actually possess it; [and] the audience apprehends that feeling or emotion, but need not come to share it." (16) They instead urge adoption of an approach to expression borrowed from Nelson Goodman, in which expression is understood "as a kind of metaphorical possession of qualities by the dance art work." (1968: 85) They develop Goodman's insight using the concept of "style" to account for "… the crucial link between the dancer and the dance as perceived." (Sirridge and Armetagos, 20)

They argue that dancers focus only on their physical training, not on what they are expressing, in both classical and modern dance. Rather than stressing the "natural" connection of the human body expressiveness in ordinary life to its expressiveness in dance, they insist that what makes dance an artform is precisely its *dis*connection from ordinary movement.

In a later article, they dismiss the appeal to "natural expressiveness" of other philosophers. They note that even dance which is constructed with so-called "ordinary" or "everyday" movement is strangely devoid of "… the everyday expressiveness of ordinary movement." (Sirridge and Armetagos 1983: 306) Their training as dancers and choreographers eager to account for a wide range of contemporary dance, from classical ballet to modern dance to post-modern dance seems to color their adamance that the supposed "natural expressiveness" of the human body has no role in our understanding of dance today. At most, there is a metaphorical connection between the images conveyed by the dancer and the understanding of their meaning, if any, by the audience.

In sum, we see serious disagreements throughout this survey on several aspects of expression. First, should we understand "expression" in dance mainly as a subspecies of expression in all the arts or as a variant of expression by the human body in daily life? Second, should we limit "expression" to the conveyance or metaphorical representation of emotions or should we understand it more broadly to include expression of ideas and linguistic content? Third, how should we understand successful expression, as authentic communication of inner feelings by the dancer? As authentic communication actually understood by the observer? As symbolic or metaphorical representations of inner states understood by the observer, regardless of the inner feelings of the performer?

I propose that "expression" is best understood pragmatically. I suggest that we resist the historic urge to find an "essence" or singular explanation of expression for dance that suits all purposes and perspectives. Note that "expression" means many things in non-art contexts. We can use ordinary language to "express" a feeling, an idea, a command, and so forth. Non-verbal expression, whether in the arts or otherwise, can also express a variety of things, with emphasis on different aspects of the expression, depending on our context and purposes.

Consistently with contemporary pragmatic theory, I want to stress that different on-going community dialogues might reasonably understand "expression" differently. Thus, a beginning modern dancer might reasonably say that she is pursuing the art in order to express herself, even though that approach to expression might strike experienced dancers or dancers in another genre or critics or theoreticians as naive. Historic modern dancers and choreographers might also understand expression as effective communication of their inner emotions to an audience which would understand the content of those inner states. This view of expression crystallized their rebellion against older, more stultified forms of classical ballet and, to understand their work, we need to recognize their sense of "expression" as they understand it. Sophisticates today might understand expression as a symbolic portrayal of emotional states, whether or not the dancer and the audience actually experienced that emotion. Post-modern dancers and choreographers might understand their expression as communication of intellectual ideas, but not emotions. There is room for everyone on the dance floor.

These positions seem irreconcilable compared against each other. But they are not intolerable as understandings in different communities within the larger art world. We should recognize that the role of expression in the artform of dance does indeed vary, depending on the role and context of the dancer, the choreographer, the audience, the critic, the theoretician, and their place in the historic dialogue of the development of dance. The complex texture of these overlapping dance worlds informs and enhances our understanding of expression.

8

The Play's the Thing: Theatrical Expression Today

Roderick Nicholls and Robert Scott Stewart

> All through the world theatre audiences are dwindling. There are occasional new movements, good new writers and so on, but as a whole the theatre not only fails to elevate or instruct, it hardly even entertains ... It is not just the trivial comedy and the bad musical that fail to give us our money's worth ... nowhere does the Deadly Theatre install itself so securely, so comfortably and so slyly as in the works of William Shakespeare. The Deadly Theatre takes easily to Shakespeare. We see his plays done by good actors in what seems like the proper way – they look lively and colourful, there is music and everyone is all dressed up, just as they are supposed to be in the best classical theatre. Yet secretly we find it excruciatingly boring ... (Brook, 12).

Peter Brook's *The Empty Stage* was not only an incisively accurate assessment of the state of the theatre in 1968, it has proven to be remarkably prescient of the current marginalized status of the theatre—despite his self assessment that it was "already out of date" at the time of its publication (157). For that cluster of qualities which he derogatorily referred to as the "deadly theatre" haunts us even more today than it did in 1968. In order to compete with movie theatres, *popular* live theatre has had increasingly to turn to trivial comedies, musicals (good and bad) and, in particular, revivals of 'the classics'. Live theatre outside of this populist tradition—including the extraordinarily eclectic series of vibrant works Brook went on to create over the next few decades—has come to resonate with an increasingly smaller, highly specialized segment of the theatre audience that *understands* the aims of such plays. Herbert Blau sees the fate of innovative or experimental theatre as reflecting the recent history of literary studies. That is to say, when the 1960's popular embrace of liberating, libidinal energy – in Marcuse and Woodstock, Ginsberg and Kesey, etc.—"abated or went under-

ground," it retreated into the continental philosophical tradition. And when it resurfaced "in *theory* as a new erotics of discourse" the new attempt to undermine the deadly "phallogocentric structure of bourgeois power" played out before a much smaller audience (Blau "(Re)sublimating the Sixties", 7). Still, whatever the explanation, any contemporary perspective on theatrical expression must confront the precipitous decline in the medium's cultural status.

In this chapter we will show how various major figures and movements *throughout* the 20th century have understood themselves to be engaged in an effort to overcome theatre that in some sense was dead. We do so initially by examining theatrical expression at its *modern* place of origin with Stanislavsky and the Moscow Arts Theatre at the beginning of the twentieth century. We turn then to an examination of German Expressionism as it in part reacted to what it took to be the excessive naturalism of Stanislavsky's method. We note, however, that both forms of theatrical expression during the first half of the twentieth century faced severe difficulties, both theoretically and practically. We refer to this as the 'paradoxes of expressionism' in Section II below. In Sections III and IV, we examine the work of Bertolt Brecht and Samuel Beckett respectively as attempts to overcome the paradoxes of expressionism. Indeed, we conclude our argument by suggesting that Beckett's later plays in particular provide a starting point for understanding theatrical expression today.

Before we turn to our argument proper, however, we begin in Section I by clarifying its context by addressing two conceptual points about the nature of theatre that are often misconstrued: first, a play is inherently performative rather than interpretive, and second, creating a dichotomy where plays are taken to be either mimetic or expressive obscures the complexity that is live theatre.

I. Conceptual Context

"Drama" is etymologically derived from the Greek *dromenon* meaning "something acted," so however much the term is expanded or enriched there is an essential connection between *drama* and *action*. And the more specific term "theatre," where the drama takes place, comes from *theatron* – a place for *seeing*. Martin Esselin sums up the relevant point: "what makes drama drama is precisely the element which lies outside and beyond words and which has to be seen as action – or *acted*" (*Anatomy of Drama*, 14). The audience's understanding of what is happening on-stage depends upon recognizing the scenario (the *mise-en-scène*), and though the meaning of the action taking place in most theatre is conveyed through the words spoken by actors, this has to be sharply qualified. For mean-

ing is filtered and shaped by *how* the actors speak those words: with what expression or gesture, or tone? how quickly or hesitatingly? in what stage-position, using what props and in what way? in what sort of light or prompted by which sound? in what "stage" position or position *vis-à-vis* other actors? and so on. "In poetry or fiction," says Ronald Hayman, "the basic currency is words; in drama it is the physical presence of the actors" (17) located in a specific space and time.

The first issue, then, concerns the seemingly self-evident aesthetic primacy of the *performance* that is physically present on the stage over *words* that exist on the page of a script.[1] Does the claim to primacy engender an antagonism that might not otherwise exist? With Stanislavski, we will see, the prime task of a director was to work with actors to excise old habits and recondition their entire psychophysical repertoire in order to liberate expressive powers that could literally embody the meaning of a play's words. Today, however, the creative spotlight is often on the director who is expected, at the very least, not to adopt a subservient attitude to the authority of the word. After all, we now know that a classic play takes on a life of its own not just as it is repeatedly performed and critically interpreted, but also as it influences a culture's intellectual ambiance and forms part of the substance of plays other than itself. For example, *Hamlet* begets *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (and Muller's *Hamletmachine* and Lepage's *Elsinore*, etc.) and it becomes impossible to perform the former as it might have been performed before Stoppard wrote his play. Stepping carefully through all the hermeneutical complexities, Charles Marowitz avoids any claim for the primacy of performance. Rather, he cautiously asserts that "the act of interpretation is every bit as creative as authorship" (33). This recognizes Brook's point, namely, that when a director glibly tells her actors "play what is written" the play will not speak at all because the creative act is to "conjure" meaning out of the words (Brook, 15). On the other hand, it also recognizes that many directors engage in gimmicky interpretations tangentially related to, or cutting against the grain of, the script.

Philosophers have confirmed this familiar conceptualization of a play's performance as an "interpretation." For instance, Hans Gadamer writes "the concept of *interpretation* can be applied not only to scholarly interpretation but to

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[1] We recognize that "performance" has become central to an academic discipline – "performance studies"—which is not only concerned with music and dance as well as theatre but also performance art and cultural or religious performances. Huxley and Witts contains an excellent collection of work in this area. Using the term, however, serves our purpose of accentuating the *live* qualities of the *total* art-work that is performed on the theatre stage

artistic *reproduction*"; hence "dramatic performance" does not consist in "a second creation" but a bringing "to life the signs of the ... dramatic text" (399; also see Michelfelder and Palmer, 21-51). Although he obviously intends to do justice to the artistic medium, the claim that a performance can be as meaningful as a written, critical interpretation of the play has the opposite effect. Theatre critics, after all, might be able to independently assess "production values" but, according to Gadamer's logic, the key aesthetic judgment *of* a theatrical performance concerns the play that is interpreted *in* the performance. Ultimately, this line of thought must identify the play with the script or the text that is "awakened" in either a performed *or* written interpretation. This is certainly true of Richard Wollheim's *Art and Its Objects* where a performance is reduced to an "occasion" for interpreting the play i.e. script. To reiterate, Marowitz the director understands that the script must indeed be carefully interpreted. Still, the multitude of choices that go into creating a performance are more accurately conceived as inventions rather than discoveries (of what is in the script) and hence those choices are not continuous with the activity of interpretation. David Saltz provides a brilliant and detailed analysis of what he calls the "interpretation fallacy" that is committed by many practitioners and deeply rooted in aesthetic theories such as Wollheim's. Immediately relevant, however, is Saltz's insight that this fallacy sanctions and supports "a clear hierarchy between the arts of playwriting and performing" (299). To fight against this philosophical bias, practitioners and theorists influenced by Artaud *via* Derrida conceive the very machinery of the traditional theatre as repressing the actor's primordial, that is to say *non-verbal*, means of expression in the cause of producing a true interpretation of a text (Derrida). Performers, therefore, ought always to fight against the quasi-theological character of the stage as a space secretly regulated by the Author of a Text that has already been written.

2) This polarizing response to a misconception about the nature of performance is further fuelled by another textbook commonplace regarding the origin of theatre. Johan Huizinga, for instance, famously argued that "play is older than culture" (1)[2] Rooted in animal behavior, the activities of children enhance play by explicitly marking out a space different from ordinary reality in which participants act out certain roles according to rules that are often highly formalized. Similarly, participants in the rites and rituals of ancient cultures performed their

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[2] Also see Victor Turner who provides a more recent (and sophisticated) analysis of play, including Richard Schechner's "Introduction" that contains an excellent summary account of how dramatic performance fits into the broader concept operating in "performance studies."

roles in an integrated cognitive ambiance that Eliade referred to as "sacred" space and time. Huizinga emphasized that the drama (*dromenon*) of ritual action is *methectic* rather than *mimetic*—participants believe they are actually reproducing or *reliving* the sacred happening or event rather than *representing* it (Huizinga, 5). Yet the assumption is that mimetic drama that takes place in the theatre originates in sacred ritual. Greek tragedy, for instance, *actually emerged historically* out of ancient Dionysian rites. As an anthropological claim this cannot withstand either an empirical attack or the philosophical skepticism regarding the possibility of identifying "the origin" of any phenomenon (like theatre) associated with Foucault's genealogy or Derrida's deconstruction. Indeed, Herbert Blau persuasively argues that it constitutes "theatre's primary illusion" (*The Dubious Spectacle*, 137).[3] A continued commitment to this illusion, however, is symptomatic of a powerful *normative* claim. All art, claimed Aristotle, is rooted in a natural tendency toward mimetic expression that produces a heightened pleasure that enhances life (*Poetics*, 1449 a-c). If so, then conventional wisdom regarding theatre's origin entails a special status for this art-form. Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* highlights this status.

Young Nietzsche was repelled by a vision of fragmented inhabitants of a rationalizing, materialistic "Alexandrian culture" cut off from powerful myths within which healthy life prospered. He promoted Wagner as an artist who unified separated and specialized means of expression that had co-existed in the communal ecstasy ancient rites, and then briefly in the theatre of Sophocles and Aeschylus. *Birth of Tragedy*'s soteriological interpretation of Wagner's art rejuvenating theatre and *hence* German culture, turned out to be very adaptable. For instance, Yeats' aspirations for his own plays were inseparably linked to his hopes for an Irish cultural renaissance. And Sartre held on to a belief in distinctive power of theatre to express Europe's deepest needs and anxieties. In 1946, describing his first experience with theatre during the war, he writes: "I suddenly ... realized what theatre ought to be – a great collective, religious phenomenon." With a political sensibility completely opposed to Nietzsche or Yeats, Sartre reclaims that the theatre "must remain a rite" with "religious functions" in order to "address the masses ... in the form of myths which anyone can understand and

feel deeply" (Sartre, 91, 93).[4] In this self-image, surely, theatre's normative ideal is revealed to be little more than an illusion. For we live in a "society of spectacle"—film, television, video-games, the WWW, Disneyworld, Super Bowl, Princess Diana's funeral etc.—where drama, as Raymond Williams pointed out, is a "habitual experience" (2) yet the masses rarely see a theatrical work. Nevertheless, there was also a purely aesthetic dimension to *Birth of Tragedy*'s normative agenda that had very practical on-stage implications. The insular development of post-Sixties innovative theatre, for instance, was always tempted by the ideal of theatrical performance that transcends its mimetic character—precisely what distinguished it, according to Huizinga, from methectic ritual. And even earlier, according to Stanley Gontarski, Beckett was trying to "redress Nietzsche's grievance" against western culture by using "ritual elements" in word and movement as a way of moving "drama closer to the spirit of music and away from its mimetic, referential level" (184).[5]

Our two conceptual issues meet, then, because transcendence of the mimetic takes one beyond word, the state aspired to in a "living" theatre valorizing the ecstatic *holy* performances associated with Artaud. Is this goal also illusory? Or is it a consequence of fallacious reasoning no less than the idea that a play is just an occasion for interpreting a text? The ideal that still haunts the theatre is perhaps a facet of what Alain Badiou conceives to be "the key feature of the 20th century," namely, "the passion for the Real" (qtd. in Zizek, 5). In the second section of this essay, we show how two influential expressionist theories ran into irresolvable paradoxes in their passionate desire to strip away excrescential features of performances in the theatre and deliver "the Real" on stage. In section three, we argue that Brecht and Beckett both devised formal innovations that successfully addressed the source of these paradoxes. They did so, moreover, in a way that reflected a keen understanding of the place of theatre in an age dominated by popular non-theatrical drama and the cultural prestige of literature. Beckett's later work, we conclude, can still be used as a constructive example for a theatre of the future though this will require qualifying Gontarski's claim regarding the playwright's attempt to fulfill *Birth of Tragedy*'s aesthetic agenda.

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[3] In this same work, Blau also discusses how the "Cambridge Anthropologists" entrenched the "origin" thesis. In what follows, the historical irony in Nietzsche's enormous role in establishing this thesis lies in the fact that his corrosively critical analysis of how philosophers have exploited the concept of "origin" was a formative influence on both Foucault and Derrida ("Truth is a Woman").

[4] For a discussion of the huge influence of *Birth of Tragedy* on Yeats and literary modernism in general, see Foster. In the *Short Organum*, Brecht provides a succinct account of the precise way that theatre is radically *different* from ritual and myth.

[5] In *Nietzsche and Music*, Charles Liebert argues that from an early age as a music student Nietzsche held the belief that music expressed what could not be expressed in speech.

II. *Paradoxes of E/expressionism*

As Stanislavsky records it in *My Life in Art*, late 19th century Russian theatre had little interest in anything but quick profits. In terms of acting especially, he felt that the situation could not have been much worse. As Stanislavsky's mentor, the actor Mikhail Shchepkin described it in his *Memoirs*:

> The actors' playing was considered good when none of them spoke in his natural voice, but in a totally artificial tone, when the words were delivered in a loud voice and when each of them was accompanied by a gesture. The words 'love', 'passion', 'treachery' were shouted as loudly as possible but the facial expression did not add to the effect since it remained invariably tense and unnatural (qtd. in Benedetti, 9).[6]

Shchepkin believed that a rejuvenated theatre must revolve around a realistic form of acting. No longer would caricature be acceptable. As Gogol said in a letter to Shchepkin, actors must "transmit" rather than "present" their characters (qtd. in Benedetti, 10). Shchepkin concurred: the realistic actor, he said, "must begin by wiping out his self ... and become the character the author intended him to be. He must walk, talk, think, feel, cry, laugh – as the author wants him to. [You can't simply] pretend to live ... you have to [actually] live ... by 'crawling into the skin' of the character" (qtd. in Benedetti, 8, 9). The influence of Tolstoy's aesthetics on this actor-centered movement associated with Stanislavski is significant. While all forms of language are essentially communicative, Tolstoy said, "mere words" do so by way of thoughts while in "art" the artist is actually able to transmit her *feelings* to her audience: art is "*a human activity consisting in this, that one man consciously by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that others are infected by these feelings and also experience them*" (Tolstoy, 510). Tolstoy is here combining the familiar Romantic focus on artists and their creations with a new emphasis on the transmission of the artist's feelings – which he refers to as an "infection" – to those who experience the work of art. Tolstoy is not clear regarding the way this infection works but it is something that even small children can do:

> To take the simplest example: a boy having experienced, let us say, fear on encountering a wolf, relates that encounter, and in order to evoke the feeling he has experienced, describes himself, his condition before the encounter, the sur-

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[6] As we discuss below, the German Expressionist movement wanted acting in just this exaggerated, non-realistic style precisely in order to express "the Real" on stage.

roundings, the wood, his own lightheartedness, and the wolf's appearance, its movements, the distance between himself and the wolf, and so forth. All this, if only the boy when telling the story again experiences the feelings he had lived through, and infects the hearers and compels them to feel what he had experienced—is art (510).

Tolstoy adds that the artist need not actually have experienced the situation related, as was the case with the boy in the example above, but actually invents them. That is, art can be completely fictional so long as feelings, real or imagined, on the part of the artist really do infect the viewer of the work of art. Yet there are other, much more intractable problems with Tolstoy's account, as detailed by Hughes in "Tolstoy, Stanislavsky, and the Art of Acting." And some of them concern the collaborative nature of theatre. Clearly, for instance, we need a script even though the playwright does not, *qua* playwright, infect us. Nor can the designers or director infect us with their emotions since they do not interact directly with the audience. Indeed, the actors are the only ones who could plausibly be considered infectious agents. Even on this limited question of the actor's ability to transmit "her" feelings to us in the audience, Tolstoy says little that would be of any practical help. Nevertheless, the most important ingredient for the transfer of emotion is said to result from the "sincerity" of the artist, and it is this general idea that inspires Stanislavski: "as soon as the spectator, hearer, or reader feels that the artist is infected by his own production, and writes, and sings, or plays for himself, and not merely to act on others, this mental condition of the artist infects the receiver." (Tolstoy, qtd. in Hughes, 44). A few years later, Stanislavsky was applying this insight as he started to work out how—with a concentrated focus on an *actor's performance*—a theatrical production could transmit emotion to the audience.

Stanislavski was actually reworking the very first debate in theatre aesthetics. After all, Plato's serious problem with what we would today call the theatre—dramatic and/or poetic writings to be presented live before an audience—was that it tends to exploit the vice of emotionalism. For all of his examples of painting and other non-dramatic arts, it was "the theatre" that most troubled Plato. No one but children or fools would mistake a painting with a "real" object, yet we are fooled, he insists, by dramatic mimesis. At a performance of a tragedy we see "one of our heroes who is in grief ... delivering a long tirade in his lamentations or chanting and beating his breast," but instead of reacting with distaste to the representation of a soul that is ruled by emotion rather than reason, we "feel pleasure, and abandon ourselves and accompany the representation with sympathy and eagerness, and we praise as an excellent poet the one who most strongly

affects us in this way" (*Republic*, 605 c-d). Unfortunately, moreover, it is just this type of soul that presents "many and varied occasions for imitation while the intelligent and temperate disposition ... is neither easy to imitate nor to be understood when imitated, especially by a non-descript mob assembled in the theatre" (*Republic*, 604 e). Plato's condemnation of the charm of theatrical mimesis and the mimicry that it spawned was part and parcel of a metaphysics in which an actor was a deceptive, morally suspect copy of a copy.[7] Stanislavski (by way of Tolstoy) accepted Plato's expressionism but in a form completely divested of Plato's metaphysics. His innovation, in fact, was to create a system (or a method) by which an actor could be *trained* to crawl inside the skin of the character. And the *approved* goal was for the audience to apprehend that character on stage as fully real.

Central to this method was "emotion memory." Stanislavski says this concept was grounded in the work of the French psychologist Theodule Ribot who distinguished between those who remembered on the basis of what they "*did*" and those who remembered "only by the *emotions* "they felt while doing what they did" (*An Actor Prepares*, 157). Timothy Wiles further suggests links not only to Romanticism but also to modern psychology, especially Freud:

> Both [Freud's] psychoanalytic method and [Stanislavski's] acting technique ask the subject to search in his past for causative incidents and to re-experience the emotions surrounding them. Both methods encourage concentration upon the physical and sensory detail surrounding these emotions; such awareness of detail enhances the felt quality of emotion. And both methods assume that the reliving of a past incident through emotions in the present will cause a result in this same present (27).

For Freud, the purpose of this activity—which, significantly, he originally planned to call the "cathartic method"—was to enable the person to come to a conscious understanding of his past. A similar purpose exists for Stanislavski's actor: "The actor's display of his own emotions awakens similar feelings in the audience; by the process of empathy with the actor's re-experienced emotions, the audience empathizes with the action being undertaken by the character he portrays. The result for the actor is an acceptance of his own past, and for the audience an acceptance of the character" (Wiles, 28) This element in Stanislavski's approach hints at something that Edward Bullough considered

essential in any aesthetic attitude. According to his famous example, we can differentiate between the practical fear we might have of the dangers of being at sea in fog and the aesthetic pleasure we can receive from the image a foggy scene can present if we can "psychically distance" ourselves from the danger of the situation. For instance, in *An Actor Prepares*, Stanislavski's student-narrator, Kostya, recounts that after witnessing a traffic accident all he could register was shock. With the passing of time, however, he acquires a psychic distance that allows him to see the aesthetic qualities even in the red flow of blood. As Stanislavksi sums up the general point: "*Time is a splendid filter for our remembered feelings – besides it is a great artist. It not only purifies, it also transmutes even painfully realistic memories into poetry*" (163, his emphasis).

The fact remains, however, that no matter how significant a part these distancing techniques play in the creation of a role in the rehearsal process, a successful performance ideally contains *no* distance. Stanislavski's passion for the Real encourages the disappearance of the actor in the character. To get a perspective on this goal we now turn to German Expressionism. Though the latter's theory and approach to theatre is less well known than Stanislavski's it has, arguably, had a greater influence on avant-garde movements in the 20th century. And David Kuhns suggests why this is a good choice for an alternate perspective when he emphasizes that an Expressionist actor's desire to demonstrate sheer expressive power, meant forfeiting "the actor's ... traditional function as mimetic agent" (226).[8] "Instead of being a mimetic agent" (226) the actor aimed to maximize direct affective impact on an audience in a performance that exhibits strong similarities to an athlete or a circus performer. This latter connection is well made. However, Kuhns elaborates the non-mimetic aim of the Expressionist actor in terms of a sharp contrast with one of the two principal traditions of theatre aesthetics. German Expressionism, that is, was an antagonistic response to the tradition of naturalism culminating in "Stanislavskian psychological realism" with its "central effort to create a mimetic illusion of individual emotional experience" (3). There no doubt exists a sharp contrast between Expressionism and the Stanislavski tradition, and the contrast does indeed highlight the distinctive character of the former. Still, Kuhns tends to overlook an important theoretical similarity. As R.I.G. Hughes notes, although Stanislavsky's early productions of Chekhov featured a realism that was "mimetic rather than expressive,"

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[7] For a good account of what "Plato distrusts" about the theatre (and "what Aristotle only partially reinstates") in the context of contemporary theory, see Elin Diamond.

[8] In a review of Kuhn's book, *German Expressionist Theatre*, Sheila Johnson points out that its "most enticing insights" concern the legacy of Expressionism, which is still influencing the contemporary theatre of Pina Bausch, Robert Wilson, Reza Abdok and others (Johnson, 158-159).

his later productions rejected "a straightforwardly naturalistic aesthetic in favor of a Tolstoyan expressive view" (41). Hence the primary contrast is between two expressionist theories (referred to henceforth as German, big "E" Expressionism and little "e" expressionism).

The seeming contradiction between Kuhns and Hughes regarding mimeticism, then, is best resolved later, after we have explored the intersection between two groups of theatrical practitioners *both* of which glorify the expressive powers of the actor. Consider, first of all, the point just noted, that insofar as the Expressionist actor aims to have a direct affective impact on the audience, he or she must develop and exploit the physicality associated with athletic performance. That was why, for example, lead actors engaged in dance-like movement. Influenced by dance theorists Isadora Duncan and Mary Wigman, moreover, the actors engaged in "spasmatic" moves strikingly different from traditional balletic grace, and the common practice of freezing supporting actors in tableaux framed and intensified the seeming spontaneity of such movement. In Shakespeare's *Richard III*, for instance, Fritz Kortner is described as moving like a predatory spider and his accentuation of the hunchback maximized the theatrical effect. Kortner also delivered lines in a quasi-musical fashion that adapted the declamatory voice of the second (non-naturalist) traditional aesthetic. Ironically enough, given this genealogy, the sound of the voice thus appeared to be another *instinctive* power in an actor's expressive repertoire. In addition, an actor often sharpened the edge on key moments by exploding into a "shriek" (*schrei*). The audience, as a consequence, could be moved and amazed whether or not an actor such as Kortner played a "believable" Richard III (Kuhns; Patterson).

The latter point must be stated more strongly. The highly theatrical qualities of an Expressionist performance are what produced the powerful immediate effect on an audience. With second rate actors, this often amounted to stress and strain of the sort familiar to anyone who has suffered through an amateur production when the acting is shrill and *over*emotional. And eventually this prompted Brecht's generalized accusation that Expressionism aspired to "divine excess" but delivered little more than emotional excessiveness (Willett, 83). Nevertheless, the example of a virtuoso performance highlights the crucial implication of Expressionism, namely, that it is precisely the qualities defining virtuosity that are inconsistent with a mastery of the textured mass of psychological detail required to create a character who the audience finds believable. In a word, its aesthetic logic inevitably leads to the *disappearance* of characterization. Of course, it would be misleading to draw the unqualified conclusion that an actor's performance is an end in itself. For insofar as the actor is truly ecstatic

"beside himself" in the ancient Greek sense of *ex-statis* – he does not embody his everyday, "real" self. Rather, he is identified with Reality. That is to say, at the moment of visceral bonding between actor and audience, the audience confronts an essential truth of Reality expressed in the performance. Therein lies the big difference between theatre and the sporting arena or the circus.

A prime source of this thoroughly metaphysical claim is Nietzsche's aestheticism, so influential in Germany during the first decades of the 20th century. Particularly important is *Birth of Tragedy* (1872) which interpreted the performances of plays by Sophocles and Aeschylus as dramatic portals through which the Greeks could penetrate the "veil of appearances" concealing the chasm separating "the worlds of everyday reality and of Dionysian reality" (section 7). Now, there is also a chasm separating Nietzsche's very specific account of Greek tragedy from the reality of modern theatre. For example, *Birth of Tragedy* highlights the dominant role of the Chorus and argues that the emergence of dramatic action moved by individual actors—widely understood today as the essence of theatre—is what contributes to tragedy's Euripedean "decline." Yet it is easy to see how this book's more general outlook shaped Expressionist thinking. After all, "the presupposition of all dramatic art," Nietzsche says, "is a magic transformation" achieved only by integrating the expressive powers of "dance, tone and words" into an overwhelming aesthetic breakthrough. The resultant Dionysian state is more-than-human "expression of *nature*" that "in its rapture ... proclaims the truth from the heart of the world" (section 8).

As Nietzsche himself emphasizes—in a preface to a new edition of *Birth of Tragedy* (1886)—this discussion of Greek theatre is couched in a dualistic Kantian vocabulary inherited from Arthur Schopenhauer. And while this was the version of Nietzsche that Expressionist theorists embraced, *Twilight of the Idols* (1888) better reflects what actually happened in one of their actual stage performances. In fact, when Nietzsche refers to a "Dionysian histrionicism" that can embody a "world of expression" alien to modernity, his words are almost clairvoyant in their ability to capture a peak performance of this kind:

> In the Dionysian state ... the entire emotional system is alerted and intensified: so that it discharges all its powers of representation, imitation, transfiguration, transmutation, every kind of mimicry and play-acting conjointly ... It is impossible for the Dionysian man not to understand any suggestion of whatever kind, he ignores no signal from the emotions, he possesses ... the art of communication to the highest degree ... (Untimely, #10)

If an actor is successful, moreover, the combined effect (on the audience) of talent, training and the consummate powers of Dionysian improvisation that define live performance, will not *terminate* in amazement:

> The essence of intoxication is the feeling of plenitude and increased energy. From out of this feeling one gives to things, one *compels* them to take, one rapes them – one calls this procedure *idealizing*. Let us get rid of the prejudice here: idealization does not consist, as is commonly believed, in a subtracting or deducting of the petty and secondary. A tremendous expulsion of the principal features is the decisive thing, so that thereupon the others too disappear. (Untimely, # 8)

In its amazement, the audience perceives some essential truth that has been expelled on the stage.

If the consequence of Dionysian intoxication ("ecstasy" is the word commonly used in translations of the Expressionistic writings) is "a tremendous expulsion of the decisive thing" then there is no necessary commitment to any form of post-Kantian metaphysical dualism. Because the essential truth can be construed as the "principal features" of some "decisive" aspect of the *human condition*. This suggests why many Expressionist plays contain not named characters but individualized types such as "Father" or "Fat Man." The underlying point applies even to those which do not follow this convention either by choice or by the simple fact of performing (or adapting) a classic work. For instance, if critics watched Jessner's production of *Richard III* under the assumption that Kortner ought to, or was intending to, create a Richard that the audience could identify *as* Richard, then they were very likely to judge his performance as inadequate. Specifically, it might be said that he expressed a grotesque (if not farcical) caricature of a real person. To respond in Nietzsche's words, however, this sort of criticism was based on a faulty "anti-artistic" intention since an artist who "lies in wait for reality" defined in terms of the *"petite faits"* can create only "a mosaic at best" (*Birth of Tragedy*, Section #7). Genuine artistic success, on the contrary, lies in a production of *Richard III* that transcends psychological detail and expresses "the principal features" of "the decisive thing," namely, the untrammeled self-assertion of a tyrant.

Once more, it is clear that success required unabashedly exploiting as potential means of expression all forms of *theatricality*, the word Stanislavski used to sum up everything he detested about the non-naturalistic stage tradition. In one key respect, though, Expressionists broke sharply from the latter tradition. Especially if one fixes upon those moments of glorious "ecstasy" when integrated spiritual and somatic powers reach the peak of expressive intensity, the *feelings* of Expressionist actors were undoubtedly as *real* as those of actors embodying Stanislavski's aesthetic demands. Of course, the fact that Dionysian ecstasy is perfectly suited to describe much work of the 20th century avant-garde—Artaud's *Theatre of Cruelty* and the American *Living Theatre* in the 1960's, for example—emphasizes that this was a point of intersection between two very different dramatic trajectories. Nevertheless, dwelling on the point of intersection does not simply reiterate that we are dealing with two "expressionist" theories. This might ultimately be a relatively trivial semantic point. Much more importantly, from this perspective we can highlight the incapacity of *any* expressionist theory—small "e" *or* big "E" theory—to provide an adequate account of theatrical expression. The fatal weakness in both is a highly inflated valuation of "real feeling" in an actor's performance. We will develop an argument that clarifies and justifies this statement by first of all identifying, at the point where both theories intersect, the distinctive paradox of each theory. Subsequently, with reference to the theatre aesthetics of Bertolt Brecht and Samuel Beckett, we will discuss the most significant attempts to address the problem at the source of these paradoxes.

The paradox of Expressionism is strongly implied in what has been already said. The authenticity of a performance is not a function of realistic characterization. Rather, the point of the actor's intensity is to confront the audience with an essential truth of the human condition that will motivate it to engage in a life-transforming action. Yet given this quasi-allegorical quality of an Expressionist play, even a virtuoso performance requires the help of a talented director who can harness a wide range of technical expertise. Indeed, a director had the formidable task of integrating every dramatic variable—set design, light, sound, props, blocking, etc.—in order to express the "decisive thing." The famous "Jessner staircase," for example, was an inseparable feature of *Richard III*'s *total* effect which *is* the play's essential truth. So to say that this production is as much "Jessner's *Richard III*" as "Kortner's Richard III" is an understatement. In general, moreover, the paradoxical development of Expressionist theatre shows the ecstatic actor becoming increasingly subservient to the visionary director who has a privileged relationship to the truth expressed in the performance as a whole. The paradox begins in the idealization of ecstatic intensity and white-hot improvisation in an acting performance. However, a play is incomplete without the overall dramatic vision provided by a director, and to execute that vision an increasing autocratic director subjects an actor to a set of abstract/symbolic constraints that clashes with the actor's Dionysian state. Eventually, therefore, audi-

ences were confronted with the phenomenon that so irritated Brecht—the excessive, over-emotional and frenetic, all-*too*-real actors immersed in designed abstraction. In sum, the need for directors to use an increasingly more powerful battery of abstractionist techniques to achieve the aesthetic *goal* of a play contradicted the spontaneous physical presence of the actor who was supposed to be the *medium* through which this goal was to be achieved.[9]

If the goal of Stanislavski's expressionism, by contrast, is achieved when an actor entrances an audience with a flesh and blood Richard III or Hamlet, then it is at least possible to imagine a successful performance taking place on bare planks with very little technical support. Of course, the theoretical demand for realistic characterization looked somewhat different after Stanislavski's "system" was exported to the United States. The actor's central status in the theatre seemed to be enhanced more than ever, but this was achieved, ironically enough, by limiting the expressive powers available to the actor. For instance, Robert Lewis—the one unorthodox director in the Lee Strasberg dominated New York Group Theatre that is still influential in contemporary American theatre—comments:

> ... if you look at the chart that Stella Adler brought back in 1934 from Stanislavski himself, you will see that one-half of it has to do with the means of expression—right down to punctuation, movement, plastique, fencing, etc. All of these things are in the Stanislavski System but not observed in any of the Stanislavski schools (qtd. in Marowitz, 80).

According to Lewis, in other words, a quasi-Freudian tendency to insist that an actor use the *emotional* resources of his or her *own self* in the creation of a character, de-legitimized a diverse range of means of expression. And expanding the scope of the dismissive term "theatrical" cut off serious thinking about the way in which the imaginative innovations of Expressionists, for example, could be put into the *service* of characterization (as Max Reinhardt arguably did *avant la lèttre*). Method actors, consequently, labored under the crippling assumption that one could not play a role without access to the appropriate raw material provided by one's own experience. Diderot's classic argument counters this as-

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[9] Actors became almost like the "ubermarionettes" laboring under the autocratic directorial approach of Meyerhold's Moscow State Theatre. Michael Patterson points out that in Germany the popular and critical success of Max Reinhardt's productions exploited the theatricality of the non-naturalistic tradition while avoiding this Expressionist paradox precisely because he was a practical opportunist bound by no aesthetic *theory* (Patterson, 34-39).

sumption by pointing out that acting depends primarily upon the simulation of feeling rather than the real thing. A talented actor can represent jealousy without ever having been torn apart by this poisonous emotion because he or she has practiced the outward, behavioral signs of jealousy. Acting, in brief, is all about semiotically creating such an illusion.

However, the narrow focus of some method acting is not the source of the distinctive paradox of expressionism. Charles Marowitz points out that Stanislavski "virtually abandoned emotional memory in the last years of his life" on the assumption that by "imaginatively accepting the fictitious circumstances of his role" and developing *physical actions* consistent with those circumstances, "true feeling would come about as a matter of course" (83). And even in the American theatre it was Stanislavski's mature thought that usually prevailed when facing the exigencies of actually directing a play. Harold Clurman's *On Directing*, for example, provides an exceptionally clear and detailed account of a strategy that integrates Diderot's key practical point into the process of character creation while maintaining the goal of real or "true feeling." Consider the initial two phases of a director's work. First, in considering a script before starting rehearsals Clurman does not try to envision some essential truth that he can theatrically expel. Rather, he identifies "the spine of the script" or the "play's main action" because "the chief motivating action for each character" emerges from that spine (74). Second, he prepares a "working script" that imagines, in "scene by scene, line by line" detail, three dimensions to each dramatic moment embodied by the actor(s) (80). For example, a working script—or "score"—shows the following notations in three columns next to one section of Giraudoux's *Tiger at the Gate* : 1) an *action* ("to tantalize"); 2) an *adjustment* expressing the attitude that colors the action in this specific context ("staunchly play with him"); and 3) an *activity*, that is, the actual behavior or movement that carries the action ("holds onto his hand – she wants to pull away (twists around him)" (284). Once rehearsals start, actors might be encouraged to exploit "emotion memory" to prompt the motivation true to their character (if only in warm-up, improvisation exercises). Quite clearly, however, a director's score depends primarily upon behavioral techniques for evoking feelings in the actor consistent with the character's "chief motivating action" and hence the play's "main action."

Americanization, therefore, does not necessarily weaken Stanislavski's expressionism. Indeed, Clurman enhances its plausibility by emphasizing that when an actor asks the magical question "what if I really was Hamlet?" at the beginning of the rehearsal process, he enters a process of character creation that is already underway. The question is "magical" precisely because there is no

blueprint or recipe specifying how to proceed (Saltz). Still, in the form of the director's score the actor does inherit a model or *imaginative idea* of the character that will help her fill in what is missing in the actual lines of the playwright's script. It is in this sense that David Kuhn rightly claims that the Stanislavski actor remains "a mimetic agent" (despite Stanislavski's embrace of Tolstoy's expressive view of art). The actor participating in a collaborative process mediated by this idea, has the distinctive task of evoking the "sub-text" and fleshing out the character originally imagined by the playwright, with tone, gesture and movement.[10] Thus the rehearsal phase of the process that begins when the actor asks the magical question "what if I really was Hamlet?" culminates on stage when the fictional character becomes real in his very body. We return, then, to the goal of expressionism: the audience "identifies" with Hamlet when it is infected by Hamlet's feelings; hence it recognizes Hamlet himself on stage, not the actor who is playing Hamlet. In contrast to Expressionism, the goal of closing the performative gap between actor and role, so to speak, is a closing of the *mimetic* gap between actor and fictional character. At this point, though, we can discern the paradox that lies in the nature of the goal itself, first from the perspective of the actor and then from that of the audience.

The theoretical demand is for an actor to believe that he really is Hamlet. Yet what could this mean in practice? What would this fusion consist in – this state of being in which the distinction between actor and character has been dissolved? Taken seriously as a *psychological reality* this fused—almost fugue-like state—would come very close to the ecstasy (Dionysian intoxication or "divine madness") in which the normative ideal of the Expressionist actor is realized. Yet this contradicts a most obvious fact, namely, that reading *Hamlet*'s script and mastering Hamlet's lines—a minimal acting requirement—entails knowing in advance how other actors will respond to one's words, not to mention the ultimate fate of one's character. So aspiring to complete absorption—"becoming Hamlet himself"—is aspiring to a state in which "acting" is impossible.[11] More

strongly, the theoretical demand driving expressionism seems to be a need to overcome the fact that what is being presented on stage is a mimetic *illusion*, but this is effectively a valorization of *delusion*. Perhaps this is an exaggeration, and the apparent paradox could be evaded simply by conceiving the aesthetic goal as a kind of Kantian regulative ideal. That is to say, actors should aspire to maximum absorption into Hamlet consistent with recognition that one is not Hamlet—aspire to fusion even though fusion is impossible. This move, however, only highlights a deep resistance to any aesthetic of the theatre that is not committed to realism. To justify our position we need to pursue a viable alternative to both Expressionism and expressionism, but the defining feature of such an alternative is best suggested by taking a second look at the paradox of expressionism from the perspective of the audience.

We smile at the familiar story of the ignorant audience member who runs onto the stage to save Desdemona from Othello because we all know that the female he sees is not really 'Desdemona'. In this audience member, who is under the illusion that the on-stage action was not an illusion, a version of the previous problem appears: can expressionism conceptualize the state of mind of an audience entranced in a performance without idealizing delusion, or in this case a fundamental ignorance of the nature of theatre? Rather than addressing this question, it is much more productive at this juncture to expand upon the positive commitment to realism that creates the question in the first place. It is noteworthy, for instance, that when Harold Clurman talks of the "composition of the play's *various* spines" (79, emphasis added) he is not just referring to the chief motivating actions of various *characters*. This is reflected in the fact that the "activities" column facing a playwright's script in the director's "score" does not always contain entries relevant to actors. Instead, there are often suggestions regarding changes in lighting, set, sound, and other such variables. For imaginative technical decisions by the director and her team of designers are often best suited to expressing a play's "style, theme, 'philosophy,' relevance ... atmosphere and mood, the social and historical background" (80). Carefully considering such decisions is part and parcel of the task of presenting a series of staged scenes as if they were dramatized moments of a fictional history. And the spine or chief action of the play as a *whole* is a condensed vision of the latter. In other words, though the scenes contained in the script are isolated from the fictional

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[10] In the expressionist style, strong actors could never be marginalized by strong directors as was the case in Expressionism. However, it is noteworthy that while Expressionism produced few great plays and no great playwrights, expressionism (in both the original Stanislavski and its Americanized varieties) depended upon exceptionally strong playwrights such as Chekov and Arthur Miller. And actors flourished in a space provided for them by a director's "interpretation" of a script. This will be discussed below.

[11] Notice that an athlete has no such problem. A football player is not "playing" quarterback in the same way an actor is playing Hamlet. The football player *is* a quarterback no differently than a family member *is* a father *even though* both are playing roles (and even

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though both might have role-models). This contrast also suggests that even though there is a point of intersection between Expressionism and expressionism, the theoretical aesthetic weakness involved in the fused state of "real feeling" is not identical. Jean-Paul Sartre's play, *Kean*, is an extended dramatic meditation on the relevant question.

history, a performance must convey the impression that the place and time of each scene has emerged from and is grounded in this coherent, continuous history. Given the centrality of characterization, this means that the director encourages actors to create "imagined biographies of the characters antecedent to the play's events" (80). Yet the audience is more likely to identify with Hamlet if a seamless web of design, sound and lighting enrich and illuminate Hamlet's scenes by expressing the "antecedent" reality of each. Only thereby is the play's spinal complexity expressed. In sum, the director succeeds when the *fictional* world that she imaginatively scored before the start of rehearsals is transformed into an on-stage world that is so *realistic* the audience becomes completely absorbed in it.

III. A Brechtian Response to E/expressionism

According to Brecht, of course, this ideal is precisely the problem. "The stage and the auditorium," he said, "must be cleared of 'magic': "no 'hypnotic fields' must be set up" nor must any effort be made "to put the audience in a trance and give them the illusion of witnessing natural, unrehearsed events" (*New Technique of Acting*, 281). Brecht's basic criticism of what we have been calling expressionism is obviously bound up with his own distinctive normative demands. Still, there is a good independent reason to be sympathetic to Brecht's approach and hence skeptical of the goal of presenting on stage a series of seemingly "natural, unrehearsed events" emerging from a continuous fictional world. Specifically, this goal is best realized in the medium of *film* or *television*. The most striking paradox of expressionism—one that can never be resolved by conceptual finesse—is that its core realism is at odds with the nature of this aesthetic medium. Taking the theory seriously—insisting upon its practice—in the modern era, therefore, entails the obsolescence of the medium. For example, Jonathan Miller argues that televising or filming Shakespeare "forces the director to adopt" the "paradigm of illusionistic realism." And this necessity reveals, by contrast, the very different "representational system" of the theatre (34). Miller quotes Bernard Williams to the effect that however reasonable it is to ask how far an audience member is from Olivier who is playing Othello, it makes no sense to ask how far she is from Othello or Desdemona (33). In general, the theatre audience is expected to engage in a type of seeing that recognizes *actual* objects and persons on the stage as possessing a "different logical status" (34) from those objects immediately abutting the stage. The perceptual expectation

of an audience set by this representational system is what gives the director freedom to use abstract and highly artificial scenery, and also to make Brechtian blocking choices by exploiting the distinction between actor and character. For example, the audience might actually see an actor waiting to make his entry as Henry V, knowing that he "is" the King only when he moves into the dramatic space defined on the stage (the space traditionally located behind the imaginary "fourth wall" of the proscenium stage).

A television or film audience, on the other hand, sees on the screen "a *picture* of actual objects representing notional things" (Miller, 36) not an actual chair representing the seat of the King or the King's Fool. While the theatre director can use the artificiality of the latter object in a contrast to the surrounding environment, such a contrast does not really operate on the screened pictures:

> ... the scenery does not abut with anything and, although it may be cut off by the edges of the screen, the spectator is left with the uneasy sense that the edges of the screen do not coincide with the framework of the dramatic action. There is always the suspicion that if the screen were larger, or the camera angle wider, there would be more of the same to be seen. This suspicion is confirmed when the camera pans right or left to reveal action that was previously out of view (Miller, 37).

Utilizing all the technical possibilities of the medium, therefore, screen directors have almost limitless power to realistically portray the "antecedent" reality of scenes that Clurman along with his designers and actors had to work hard to suggestively evoke.[12] One way of summing up Brecht's criticism of mainstream theatre is to say that it was pursuing a goal perfectly suited for a competing medium. More positively, this implies that Brecht's normative demands are not just a consequence of an idiosyncratic, Marxists orientation but rather an endorsement of the distinctive "representational system" of the theatre and the mode of "seeing" appropriate to the audience accepting that system. Brecht's theatre aesthetics, in other words, can be fruitfully conceived as an attempt to theoretically formulate best practices consistent with a specific medium as it is shaped by

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[12] Of course, given the editing techniques that have been developed to achieve this realistic effect the eyes of the audience must be strictly governed by the perspective of the camera(s). "Movie shots," says Miller, "eliminate what they do not show" whereas the theatre audience is always capable of seeing everything that is happening on the stage at one time and hence "peripheral events on the stage subliminally modify the experience of the salient ones" (39).

determinate historical and technological circumstances. As a theorist, Brecht had a huge advantage over Stanislavski and the Expressionists in this regard because he was a brilliant playwright.[13] There is obviously a huge literature on Brecht's sustained attempt to, quite literally, *experimentally* devise a form of theatre suitable for human condition as it was unfolding in the 20th century. However, our focus is the way in which Brecht responded to the impasse between Expressionism and expressionism. Hence we will briefly note three features of his strategy for overcoming the latter's impossible goal of absorbing actors into characters and the audience into the enacted drama. This strategy drew upon the practical innovations of former. Yet this is perfectly consistent with his distaste for Expressionist performance noted earlier. For in terms of our ongoing argument it will be clear that Brecht scrupulously avoids the point of intersection between those two theoretical antagonists by systematically destroying their fetish with "real feeling."

Assuming that Brecht's "theorizing" summarizes successful practices then a masterpiece of his maturity such as *Life of Galileo* should exhibit our three main points.

1) On the face of it, traditional Aristotelian aesthetics would seem to dictate the most plausible approach for a playwright aiming to represent the subject of Galileo on the stage. After all, the experience of the scientist possesses biographical contours that could easily be used to shape the events transpiring on the stage into a temporal sequence of actions that appear to be happening "now." From the audience's perspective these events, moreover, naturally culminate in the traumatic experience of Galileo's inquisition and forced recantation. This would be an ideal emotional fulcrum around which the audience could identify with the scientist. The very construction of Brecht's play, however, is intended to contradict this basic Aristotelian structure and indeed any kind of script carried by a series of "actions" from a fictional world to be presented as if they were happening in real time. For the various scenes or "parts" of *Galileo* "are to be carefully set against one another by giving them their own structure, that of a play within a play" ("Short Organum", 201). This episodic structure persistently breaks up and interrupts the dramatic flow. The brash dancing, costumes and song of the "carnival scene," for example, does this in a way particularly reminiscent of Expressionist practice. Brecht's convention of announcing the gist of a scene (in this play with slides) also "constantly reminds the audience," as Martin Esslin puts it, "that they are merely getting a report of past events" rather than "a spurious present" (*Brecht*, 125). Indeed, the dramatic centerpiece of the inquisition itself takes place off-stage. In sum, each episode in *Galileo* possesses individual significance but each episode plays off each other. So the play as a whole is

designed to reflect the contingency of historical events in which Galileo exists and hence create spaces, so to speak, within which the audience can think about, and eventually judge this ambiguous figure.

2) The on-stage performance, then, must maximize the possibilities of these spaces built into the script. Above all, the actor playing Galileo ought to open up the performative gap between himself and his role – the gap that expressionism strives to close – because there is not *one* Galileo or an integrated experience of Galileo's to be presented. Rather than striving to feel what Galileo feels in this situation, the actor has to work hard to achieve a kind of "distance" from that mirage. The famous "alienation effects" are artistic tactics to illustrate or even demonstrate something *about* Galileo to an audience well aware that Galileo is not *really* on-stage. Since "the idea of a fourth wall which is imagined separating the stage from the audience" and hence the "illusion that the stage action is actually taking place without spectators" has been abandoned, Brecht says, "the actor must provide what he has to show the audience with clear gestures of 'showing'" (meaning by gestures our whole apparatus of expression) (*New Technique of Acting*, 282). It is crucial to recognize that in encouraging acting of this sort Brecht is as far removed from expressionist theory as possible and yet he is also very far from repeating the Expressionist tendency of marginalizing characterization. This becomes strikingly clear upon reading Harold Clurman's review of Charles Laughton's Galileo (*Collected Works*). Even though Laughton collaborated with Brecht himself on an English translation of the play and executed the role consistent with Brecht's aesthetic, a director strongly identified with Americanized Stanislavski could enthusiastically endorse Laughton's performance. To reiterate, Brecht attempted to capture in theory the characteristics of theatre that worked on its own terms given the needs and characteristics of modernity. Criteria of a successful performance included entertainment as well as "instruction." And the experience of Clurman proves that a Galileo/Galileo shaped by Brecht's conception of character could succeed in both respects even if one was not predisposed to the latter.

Another way of putting this is that means of expression that are overtly "theatrical" can provide powerful support for actors committed to characterization of a Brechtian sort. This is reflected in Brecht's long-lived collaboration with designers such as Caspar Neher. For example, Brecht's comment about Neher's design of a simple set piece like a chair is well-known. Neher, that is, was not concerned with realistically replicating a chair of a certain time and place. Rather, it was to "show" or to accentuate the intention of a specific scene in terms of how the actor must sit on or use the chair. A set-piece of any kind must "in effect ... be a fellow actor" ("Short Organum", 234). Galileo must con-

form to its constraints knowing the point it is intended to convey to the audience. In other words, the actor on the chair—the enthusiastic young scientist working in the first scene of *Galileo* or the defeated scientist eating in a late scene—must constitute a total "gest" or image. Brecht, then, takes his cue from Expressionism in trying to "expel the decisive thing" in the relevant scene. As David Kuhns points out, though, this method of stylization is in the "analytic mode" of the sort that conceives "acting as essentially argumentation" (233).

3) As already suggested, therefore, the audience participates in this cognitive process. Brecht has designed everything from scratch so that the audience cannot be absorbed in an entrancing illusion that pretends not to be one. And insofar as audience members understand better the way that the science fathered by Galileo actually operates in the world the better they are positioned to change the world. This does not necessarily mean that the audience is devoid of feeling, a state that is probably not compatible with entertainment. For passing judgment on the Galileo greedily wolfing down his goose livers after trying to persuade his former student Andrea that he was a coward in recanting, it is perfectly possible that an audience imagines what it might be like to miss a opportunity with possibly historical implications and give into authority due to fear of physical pain. Yet the key word is *possibility*. When the audience feels strongly, it is as a consequence of thinking about the scene as it is juxtaposed with all the other scenes—a consequence of achieving the play's goal, not the goal itself.

IV. Beckett and 21st Century Theatre

John Willett points out that for decades Brecht was contemptuously referred to as an Expressionist by orthodox Marxists because he wanted nothing to do with the Moscow approved aesthetic of "socialist realism." This supports our assumption that Brecht was a liberating force in theatre, not a theorist concerned with prescribing practices that were correct *a priori*. He tried to eradicate paradoxical practices generated by outmoded or dead-ended aesthetic, technological—and in the case of Expressionism, for example, metaphysical—theories even as he appropriated and adapted those his epic or dialectical theatre could use. Samuel Beckett was the most important figure who benefited from (and only eight years younger, assisted in) Brecht's attempt to force a systematic re-examination of theatre aesthetics. This can be said without implying a specific historical relationship. Trying to ascertain such a relationship is not only something that is well beyond the scope of this paper. It would also halt the direction of our main

argument that depends only on the existence of an interplay of "precedence and possible borrowing, similarities in the orchestration of dramatic structure," and the like, that "flows from Brecht to Beckett, from Beckett back to Brecht again" ("Brecht's Alienated Actor", 195). Nor will we use *Waiting for Godot* to advance the argument. Rather, in his short, later plays Beckett shows himself to be a thoroughly original *practitioner* of the theatre, working with a powerful conception—though not "theory"—of theatrical expression that has a value transcending the qualities ensuring his canonical status within 20th century *literature* (dramatic or otherwise). As Jonathan Kalb puts it: Beckett "has continued to influence new ideas about performance and has in fact insinuated itself into the best work of the contemporary avant-garde" to the point where he "is the logical starting point for historical discussion of any significant new work" (144).

Kalb makes a huge claim considering the diversity of works referred to by a term ("avant-garde" theatre) that is more an explorative site for pursuing *alternate directions* that this art-form *ought* to take, rather than a stable, descriptive label (see Schechner). The claim is not weakened by the fact that Beckett's early plays are now modernist icons, "classics" easily performed in a season of plays presented by repertory theatres to mainstream audiences—*Macbeth*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Waiting for Godot*, etc.—and hence not avant-garde by any definition of the term. What needs to be addressed is the reason why future-looking practitioners would resist the influence of the *later plays* and would be skeptical about the idea that Beckett, "arguably the playwright of the 20th century," will continue to "hold the stage in the 21st century" (O'Toole). Consider, in this light, our previously made point regarding the "interpretation fallacy" with its tendency to identify *play* with *script*. If the play is the thing, in other words, Stanislavski's expressionism, German Expressionism and Brecht's dialectical theatre all aspired to a theatre in which the "thing" is *the performance itself*. Notwithstanding the sharp differences in way "performance" was normatively conceptualized, did not all three in *some* sense try to liberate performance from a script? Peter Brook's antagonism to the director saying "play what is written" reflected his attempt to create living versions of Shakespeare, but it also suggests the broad logic behind a flood of more radical work since then. To give just two high-profile examples, consider how Elizabeth Lecompte's and Robert Lepage's critically acclaimed treatments of well-known scripts illuminate the diverse means by which they strive for a similar goal. In Lecompte's 1984 Wooster Group production, for instance, the persona and words of Timothy Leary were integrated into Miller's *The Crucible* resulting in the "creation," *LSD ... Just the High Points*; and in 1991, the group used technological innovations and cross-cultural motifs to explore the intertexuality of Chekov's *Three Sisters* in *Brace Up!* French-Canadian

Robert Lepage acknowledges that his theatre work is influenced by his experience of rock concerts and dance shows growing up in a provincial backwater where theatre was invariably deadly: "it sounds a little superficial now but theatre for a long time in North America, has been dispossessed from its theatricality. It started to imitate film more and more and got stuck with cinematic realism" (Lepage 238). And this genius of the theatrical treats a script by Shakespeare as "an avalanche of resources, a box of toys" for which the author "offers a lot of permission to the actor, the translator, the director" (243) to express a multitude of ideas in striking stage images derived from improvisations and enhanced by high-tech devices.

As we noted in Section I, then, by the turn of the 21st century, innovative work in the theatre invariably exhibits a strong reaction against any perceived authority of the written word. According to Richard Schnechner, this tendency is intensified by the breakdown of boundaries between what were previously distinct varieties of "performance." Hence elements of vaudeville, sport, therapy sessions and the like (not to mention the religious rituals that Artaud and Grotowski had already tapped as a source of theatrical performance) were likely to appear on the stage. Elizabeth Lecompte sums up the relevant point: "I'm not a writer" but "I'm *using* other people's writing" in a "process of reinvention" that is "akin to writing" (emphasis) though one in which everything important to theatre is "materialized on stage," (234, emphasis added) rather than on paper in a text. Is this not precisely the attitude that Beckett ruthlessly *opposed*? The case for an affirmative answer usually revolves around Beckett's notorious insistence on a disclaimer being added to the program of the Mabou Mines 1984 production of *Endgame* because director Joanne Akalaitis decided to give the play a post-apocalyptic setting in a New York subway tunnel. The playwright conceived the words in the script specifying setting to be an integral part of the play thereby precluding creative decisions conventionally assumed to be directorial choice. Now, one of the distinguishing features of the later plays is a conscious, strategic leveling, so to speak, of every word in a script. Detailed stage directions, costume notes, lighting and sound specifications, namely, all those features of a play that have always been chosen by those who collaborate in staging a performance of the playwright's script, are built into the latter coequal with the words spoken by characters. In *Footfalls*, Beckett even builds the minutia of blocking into the script with May's recurrent *words* "... six, seven, eight, nine, wheel" matching her pacing back and forth within the indicated strip of light. Hence a different blocking or lighting decision necessitates changing the words Beckett gives to May. It is in this respect that the very performance of Beckett's

late plays in contemporary theatres seems to stand in striking opposition to the avant garde's minimal requirement for creative growth.[13]

On the other hand, however, during the last thirty years of his life Beckett took much farther than Brecht the idea of a script as a labile entity that evolves as it is performed. The recently published production notebooks show Beckett working on a script *during* rehearsals of a production that he directed and also *after* those productions. He was similarly engaged with plays that he did not direct himself. In this respect, Beckett followed the standard procedure of the Wooster Group and always presented his plays as "works in progress." Definitive scripts of the late plays, moreover, simply do not exist. Which is to say, the problematic "thing" in Beckett's late theatre does not actually exist (Gontarski, Beckett and Performance). More positively, as Beckett immersed himself more and more in the practicalities of staging a play, he recognized that the traditional division of labor between writer who produced a script and those who collaborated in performing it, could no longer be assumed. The process of creation needed to be radically adjusted to meet the demands of the medium. As Enoch Brater puts it in an aptly titled essay, "genre under stress," the *former* playwright:

> ... collapses our traditional way of thinking about drama as something separate and distinct from performance. In the later Beckett *the two have become one*, for only in this way has it become possible for the playwright to communicate his private image in the public forum that is the theater. (*Beyond Minimalism*, 4, emphasis added).

Herein lays the crucial reversal of perspective. Beckett is certainly an anomaly in terms of how he responds to the paradoxes inherent in the theatrical event as we have sketched them in this essay. Robert Lepage suggests the favored contemporary response, namely, to conceive the script as a "platform" for creating a "new world" in performance. Heinrich Muller, working in the Brechtian tradition, stopped calling himself a playwright because he conceived "texts" as pretexts for the performative acts of others. Beckett, by contrast, opted to help bring his germinal idea to fruition by taking an active role in the creative performance and in so doing questioned the nature of collaboration. Despite the huge difference

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[13] See Stewart and Nicholls for a more detailed discussion the *pragmatic* nature of Brecht's overall aesthetics. The dramaturgical *process* emphasizes the infinitude of choices that are made by actors and directors even within the rehearsal process itself.

in strategy, however, he affirms the same goal of ensuring the identity of 'the play' and *on-stage performance*.

We conclude by briefly discussing several crucial features of Beckett's later plays that flesh out the latter idea. In doing so, we argue that they resolve the two conceptual issues raised in section one—the ambiguous relationship between words and what is "beyond words," and theatre's ambition to transcend mimeticism—and hence justify the claim that these plays provide a "logical starting point" for understanding theatrical expression today.[14] Consider, first of all, the central image in *Not I* of a huge, disembodied, vaginal mouth hovering eight feet high in the air, spewing a torrent of incomplete sentences. This suggests a feature of Beckett's strategy that looks backward and forward at the same time. On the one hand, as Herbert Blau notes, "to this day certain tendencies in performance art would seem to be extractions or extrusions of verbal or gestural properties from Beckett's theatre as well as scenic images such as ... the Mouth of *Not I*" (Blau, *Sails of the Herring Fleet*, 117). On the other hand, it can be seen as a perfect retro-Expressionist icon that reiterates the significance of that movement's embrace of the "theatrical" early in the 20th century. In fact, the late plays usually turn on a single, viscerally powerful image on stage that was certainly influenced by German Expressionist painting.[15] The overall effect is consequently abstract depersonalization. Not only is *Not I*'s main "character" an illuminated mouth, sharply focused, but the second actor ("of indeterminate sex") is costumed in a djellaba and listens in a stylized pose that is broken only by three movements expressing degrees of compassion. The names assigned to roles reflect Beckett's interest in creating an image "one will never forget" rather than the individualized features of a character: Mouth, Auditor, Reader, Protagonist, Woman, etc.[16] However, the genius of Beckett as writer/creator was to

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[14] In *Subsequent Performances*, Jonathan Miller discusses Richard Poel's attempt at the turn of the 20th century to do the impossible, namely, produce Shakespeare's plays as Shakespeare would have seen them. And Beckett's attempt to build into the scripts of these plays all that would be necessary to produce *authentic* versions in the future would only seem to ensure the production of deadly copies or reproductions.

[15] See note regarding Kalb above.

[16] Brater (*Beyond Minimalism*) explores the genealogy within the theatre. However, Jessica Prinz provides an excellent, comprehensive case for the influence of Expressionist painting on Beckett. Michael Patterson notes that Beckett was also affected by his youthful experience of watching an Expressionist play in Ireland. And he makes the intriguing (though undeveloped) point that many of the best Expressionist actors turned out to be very adept at acting in Beckett's plays.

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transform a serious flaw in Expressionist theatre (and a potential weakness in contemporary performance art) into an essential feature of works that have a tremendous dramatic impact.

To put it bluntly, an actor in these plays must not try to create a believable character because *there are no characters in the plays to represent*. Radical as it might sound, this is nothing more that a statement of a commonly recognized fact. Jonathan Kalb details the sharp difference between actors who thrive in *Godot* or *Endgame* (where Stanislavski techniques *can* be used successfully) and those who are able to adapt to a theatre that requires actors to eschew any support from psychological truth. Directors such as Xerxes Mehta and Gerry McCarthy provide particularly emphatic warnings to directors and actors who interpret the scripts of Beckett's later plays with the aim of bringing an imaginative world to life on stage, and to actors trying to "imitate" or "represent" a character in that world, but McCarthy sums up the crucial constructive point: "Beckett gives the actors problems of performance, not interpretation" (260). Beckett, that is, gives actors certain words to speak within highly specified constraints (which might or might not include movement) and the actor's creativity lies in how she physically responds to, and maximizes the possibilities of, those constraints. The actor strapped to a frame, blindfolded and rest of face blackened in *Not I*, literally *is* a mouth. In his famous account of Beckett's direction of *Footfalls* production, Beckett's long-time assistant Walter Asmus relates that a skilled Stanislavski actor was initially frustrated and distraught by her incapacity to understand who May was. Beckett patiently and consistently drew her attention to May's continual pacing—the *walk* which was the center of the play—knowing that once she found the right physical movement the tone and overall rhythm of the words would follow. He also highlighted the manner in which May must tentatively create a dialogue between two imaginary persons as if on the spot. And he turns this necessity of *improvising* a way to deliver the lines into a rare generalization about an approach to any of the plays. Jonathan Miller gives a cogent critique of the position that a dramatic script is similar to a musical score (39-48). However, it is highly appropriate to compare in a general way the kind of creative process that Asmus describes to the task of a musician (or dancer). For those artists must also concentrate on mastering the linguistic and physical structures that must be executed in performance before they ponder the meaning of a piece.

As noted before, light and sound are amongst the variables that Beckett thoroughly integrates into the play itself. So even if we continue to talk conventionally about them as part of the "design" of a play, they are more accurately conceived as additional performance constraints. This is apparent as early as *Play*

where only the heads of three actors sticking out of three identical urns are facing the audience. There is no interaction between the actors, but rather each one speaks when a sharp spotlight hits his or her face. In seemingly arbitrary fashion, the spot is turned off, interrupting one head only to be switched on to another head which must immediately begin speaking until he or she is inevitably interrupted. Brecht, of course, had inserted all sorts of features into his plays to remind performers and audiences of the artificial nature of any performance, for example, bright, insistently white lighting. In *Play*, however, the operator of the spotlight is a *fourth participant* in the performance. Not only is the light eventually spoken of by the others, it is the only "other" to which they directly respond: "And now, that you are ... mere eye. Just looking. At my face. On and off" (Beckett, 157). Actors feed emotionally off each other in conventional theatre, constantly providing cues that prompt realistic interaction and dramatic flow, and they are assisted in this by lighting changes. The role of the spotlight in *Play*, by contrast, "alienates" familiar cueing by having the actors occupy separate spaces and forcing them to go through a terrifying, real time ordeal that requires the physical acuity and stamina of athletes. In other plays, sound as well as light becomes an aesthetic object in its own right rather than a medium. Brecht complained about theatre audiences, "true, their eyes are open ... but they stare rather than see, just as they listen rather than hear" ("Short Organum"). Beckett's plays have the capacity to activate and enliven the audience no differently than actors. Stanton Garner sums up this performative effect on the audience:

> The visual techniques of Beckett's late plays violate through systematic strategies the perceptual inclinations and tendencies of the spectator as visual processor of theatrical imagery ... As Beckett's characters find themselves increasingly confined in their ability to act, limited in their ability even to perceive the diminished worlds into which they are thrown, Beckett's audience finds itself involved more deeply in the activities of seeing, engaged more fully in the activities of seeing (370).

We return at the end, then, to the ancient notion of theatre as a "place of seeing" – of seeing and hearing (as opposed to staring at or listening to). Of course, when Beckett took a leading role in the performance of the later plays he accentuated their singular, so-called minimalist effect that is contrary to the *Birth of Tragedy* style metaphysical ambitions of Expressionism (just as it is to the psychological realism of expressionism). Indeed, implicit in a Beckett performance is an assumption also held by Heiner Muller and (Muller's sometimes collabora-

tor) Robert Wilson, namely, "that a work of art is not about something—it is something" (qtd. in Huxley and Witts, 281). Beckett's writing, for instance, was *designed* to be part of a performance and to conceive the performance as an interpretation of the writing would be a self-contradictory. Does this mean that Beckett succeeded in going beyond the level of the mimetic, as Gontarski claimed? That depends. Xerxes Mehta says that "the sonic and visual images that appear in the late Beckett seem to me to be the first wholly successful images in theatre of the great *modernist* project: to make art that ... in Flaubert's words is 'about nothing but itself'" (184; emphasis added). Increasingly, though, the autotelic nature of this theatre is conceived to perform the crucial ideas of *postmodern* theory. In a study written from the point of view of Derrida, Lacan, Kristeva and Irigiray, for example, Anna McMullan concludes that "Beckett's later plays both parody the repressive mechanisms of logocentric representations and trace an alternative representational practice" (124). Both these positions, however, suggest that early in the 21st century, Beckett remains "the last best hope of the Author in the theater" (Kalb, 162).[17]

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[17] After playing Mouth in *Not I*, Jessica Tandy made the oft-quoted statement about the play: "you might not know what it means but you will never forget it" (qtd. in Brater, *Why Beckett*, 110)

9

Representation, Expression, and the Interpretation of Art: Focusing Film as a Model

David E. W. Fenner

In this essay, I argue that a necessary condition for a bona fide interpretation of a work of art—regardless of the form, media, or genre of the art—is either citation of the representational qualities of the work or the expressive qualities of it. I admit that this claim initially may appear counterintuitive, but if representation in art and if expression in art are taken as broadly as the literature—literature coming out of aesthetics over the last three decades—suggests and supports, then I think an argument for my claim is at least worth the examination. Before advancing the argument, I want to do three things. First, I want to talk about art interpretation, about its values, goals, and methods. I take film as my focal art-form in this discussion, and I will explain why below. Second, I want to talk briefly about representation and what some of the trends have been in this area; I want to do this specifically with an eye to defining "representation" for the sake of the upcoming argument. Third, I want to talk briefly about expression in the same way and for the same purpose. As soon as I complete these tasks, I will move on to my argument.

Art Interpretation

There are many forms of art: painting, sculpture, print-making, photography, music, theatrical plays, literature, dance, opera, architecture, and, I'm sure, several more. Their practitioners produce works of art. The vast majority of these works are artifactual, and most undergo some process of creation at the hands of the artist. Some of these works are "adopted" as art—objects and events both artifactual and occasionally natural—and some of the works are meant more for appreciation by the mind than the senses. This seems especially the case in the last century. It has been argued by George Dickie (G. Dickie et al 1989, 196-205; 1974) that one necessary condition for an object or event to be properly a work of art is for it to be a candidate for presentation. If this is true, then it is easy to identify a three part relation in which every work of art fits. First, you need an artist, a producer, an adopter, a presenter, an interpreter (in Arthur Danto's sense of the word) (1964: 591-584; 1981)—an artist. Second, you need a work of art. Third, you need, at least in a potential sense, and if Dickie is right, an audience. The audience can be merely potential, but that is clearly the exception to the rule; most works of art are offered for appreciation, consideration, and/or evaluation to a person or persons beyond the artist herself. I suppose there is nothing illogical about the artist herself functioning as her own audience, but, again, this would be the exception, not the norm. It is very common for audience members, in their roles as considerers of a work of art, to interpret it. It is common for viewers (hearers, etc.) to spend time thinking about what a work of art means. There are a plurality of positions concerning how to do this correctly,[1] about whether correct interpretation is a singular matter or whether more than one interpretation of a given work can be seen as equally valid, and about the role and position of the artist in establishing the meaning of a work. While much

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[1] Some examples include: Annette Barnes, *On Interpretation*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988. Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Limits of Critical Interpretation," in Sidney Hook, ed., *Art and Philosophy*, New York University Press, 1966, 61-87. Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Testability of an Interpretation," in his *The Possibility of Criticism*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970. H. Gene Blocker, "Interpreting Art," *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 1990, 29-44. Marcia M. Eaton, "Good and Correct Interpretations," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 29, 1970, 227-234. Stanley Fish, *Is There A Text In This Class?*, Harvard University Press, 1980. Alan H. Goldman, "On Interpreting Art and Literature," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 48, 1990, 205-214. E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, Yale University Press, 1967. Joseph Margolis, "Reinterpreting Interpretation," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 47, 1989, 237-251. Robert J. Matthews, "Describing and Interpreting a Work of Art," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 36, 1977, 5-14. Peter McCormick, "Interpretation in Aesthetics: Theories and Practices," *Monist* 73, 1990, 167-180. Eva Schaper, "Interpreting Art," *Aristotelian Society*, Suppl. 55, 1981, 33-46. Robert Sharpe, "Interpreting Art," *Aristotelian Society*, Suppl. 55, 1981, 19-32. Richard Shusterman, "Interpretation, Intention, and Truth," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 46, 1987. Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation and Other Essays*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1964. Robert Stecker, "Art Interpretation," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52, 1994, 193-206. Charles L. Stevenson, "Interpretation and Evaluation in Aesthetics," in M. Black, ed., *Philosophical Analysis*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950.

of this literature is very interesting, I do not want to defend one view against others here. Yet, despite my demuring from taking a side in this, I do want to spend a little time characterizing what art interpretation looks like. I want to discuss the methods, strategies, and, broadly, the goals of art interpretation. This of course has to be done if I am to claim that I can identify a necessary condition of it.

As I said above, I want to take film as my model. The reasons for this are, first, film presents in a very overt and obvious way elements which figure into standard art interpretations. Films tend to wear their narrative or textual content on their sleeves, so to speak, and while there may be much in terms of the text that lies below this, a great deal is given directly and immediately to the viewer (/hearer). (Wimsatt and Beardsly 1946, 3-23) Second, film is generally aesthetically easy. While many artforms and many artworks require a great deal from their attenders in the way of cognitive and affective contemplation and scrutiny, film—virtually the whole of film popularly available—requires less in the way of investment of audience-driven and initiated imaginative engagement than many other artforms. What is present on the screen does not, as it does in literature, have to be constructed imaginatively in the mind's eye; it's right there on the screen. In the vast majority of film, although certainly not all, care is taken to provide the viewer with a comfortable representational content. American films tend to follow the Realists rather than the Formativists here.(Andrew 1976) Third and perhaps most importantly, the film artist, the *auteur* (in the cases where that name applies to the director) has a greater control over what appears on the screen, and is heard in the soundtrack, than most other artists working in other media. This is because she has the time to craft the content: films have temporal duration; they hold their audience's attention for many minutes, and the director has an opportunity to deliver to the audience a large and very precise collection of images and sounds. Secondly, the film also has a spatial existence; filmmakers refer to the world of a particular film as that film's diegesis, and the director has the opportunity to construct that world with remarkable attention to detail. Of course I am describing mainstream film; there are so-called experimental or avant garde films that bear little resemblance to what I describe here. But hard cases make bad law, and generally the three reasons I have laid out for choosing film as my model hold for the vast majority of films.

What goes into interpreting a film? Let's start with two straightforward examples:

I-1: One interpretation of *2001: a Space Odyssey* holds that the film is about the evolution of human beings, and how humans are assisted in their evolution through the deliberate, though passive, efforts of some more evolved group of beings, or at least through their instruments, the big black monoliths. The human move from being animals to being tool-and-weapon wielders is occasioned by the presence, and the touching of, one of the monoliths. The move from David Bowman being an ordinary human being to being a giant space fetus (how can one put this?) is occasioned by the presence, and the touching of, one of the monoliths. "We are not alone, and thank goodness for that."

I-2: Another interpretation of *2001* holds that the film is a Garden of Eden myth[2] (note the strong variance with evolution), where the monolith functions as an analogue of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil—although, admittedly, Kubrick is fairly morally opaque in the film. The monolith, and its importation of knowledge, arrives, and the monkey-men are then in possession of the ability to kill and wage war. With each further visit to a monolith, additional knowledge is gained, and with that additional knowledge, humans are changed forever—not necessarily to the better. (How better to describe the lengthy scene in which Bowman is within the monolith than to say that he is being offered a tremendous amount of information?)

These two interpretations certainly do not exhaust the possibilities; however, these two are fairly standard as interpretations go, and probably fairly standard as interpretations of *2001*. Why are they so standard? The answer is that upon hearing, or coming up with, one of these interpretations, a viewer's perspective of the film is altered. This alteration is generally not radical, but it allows the viewer to look for *coherence* amongst the various parts of the film (narrative and not) using a *measure*: how well is the presence of the various aspects of this film explained, *or motivated,* by understanding them in relation to their delivering a message the content of which is about X (X being this particular interpretation)?

Film theorists believe that *auteurs* do not include items in their films, whatever those items might be, without good reason, without a particular function. This function is what "motivates" that item. Actors are "motivated" by their functions as characters in the film. Props are "motivated" by their functions as part of the film's mise-en-scene. Understanding these functions, understanding what motivates a particular part of the film, is a quest for explanation. Interpretations offer explanations. They attempt to present a picture where the presence and the functions of the various aspects of a film are explained coherently. This explanation is the message or meaning of a film, but since there is frequently a

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[2] This was suggested to me by Ronnie Willerer.

plurality of explanations from which to choose, we call them interpretations. *If this is a good account of interpretation, then we can judge whether a given interpretation is any good against how deeply, simply, comprehensively, and coherently it explains the collection of the particular aspects of a particular film.*

I have attempted to be merely descriptive in my account of interpreting film. I mean to define it here in lexicographical terms rather than in terms involving the goals, values, and contexts of art interpretation. But I think that if this is a decent description of film interpretation, it is also a passable description of art interpretation in general. Though film has conventions which make the construction of my description all the easier, the model of explanation—of a kind of problem-solving explanation—that I paint here can I think be applied to any artwork in any artform.[3] This description was my first task. Now on to the second.

Representation

What it is to represent a thing in a work of art has been a matter of focused discussion in the discipline of aesthetics for the last several decades.[4] This discussion, however, does not find its start in the past century, nor even in the past millennium. The discussion began in the fourth century B.C. with the criticism that Plato leveled at art specifically in view of its representational function.[5] For Plato, the artist—in creating an imitation of some natural object—is merely creating an imitation *of an imitation*, if we think, as Plato did, of natural objects as *imitations* of the Forms. Art, instead of bringing us closer to reality, pushes us away. In art there is no reality, and so no possibility of knowledge. This criticism—this challenge—was to some extent answered by Aristotle.[6] For Aristotle, art-as-imitation is not negative. Imitation is natural to animals, and particularly to animals of higher. Not only is it natural to imitate nature, but it is natural to be delighted by imitations of nature. Furthermore, for Aristotle, the artist does not simply imitate nature; she attempts to capture the universal or archetypal.

Artistic representation, then, is not valueless. It is valuable in that it seeks to demonstrate what is good, or best, in nature. Today we still trade on Aristotle's answer as works of art which are in some sense obviously representational are judged within a context of finding value in representational art—if a representational artwork fails in its representation, we judge it poor because of this failure and not because it is representational. Indeed, the very judgment itself turns on finding representation valuable, such that the degree to which this particular work failed in this regard, the worse our judgment of that work.

To represent a thing in a work of art has meant for the artwork—or better, the representative content of the artwork (if that is not question-begging) – to resemble the thing that it represents, to depict the thing it represents, to denote the thing it represents, to symbolize the thing it represents, (Goodman 1976) and to pick out, within the created, fictional, or "make-believe" world of that artwork, the thing it represents.[7]

Representation, in all of these approaches, is about the representational content of the artwork. That an artist means to represent a given object, event, feeling, state, or idea in an artwork is not sufficient for representation to obtain. Were Mark Rothko to claim that a given work of his is representative of a given emotion, so long as we can see this in the work itself, we can judge his goal to be met in this regard. Were Jackson Pollock to claim that a given (later) work of his to be representative of a particular family—in the sense of portraiture—so long as we cannot see this, we can judge the goal unsuccessfully met. This is not about establishing representation but about evaluating the success of an artist who claims to have represented something in a work. The artist only enters into the discussion that much and no more. While the goodness of a representation might include reference to the artist, representation qua representation is about the object or event—the artwork itself—and not about the artist.

Expression

There are two sorts of expression theories in the philosophy of art. Alan Goldman describes them:

> The main debate here pits communication or arousal theorists, who hold that music is sad, joyful, or angry by communicating or arousing like states in listeners, against cognitivists, who claim that we recognize analogues of these

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[3] This concept of interpretation is certainly not original to me by any means. A full discussion of this view can be found in Alan H. Goldman, *Aesthetic Value*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995, 94-107.

[4] The most influential work in the last three decades on the nature of representation comes from Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art*, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1976.

[5] Plato, *The Republic*, trans. F. M. Cornford, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1941, 321-340.

[6] Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. R. Janko, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987.

[7] Kendall Walton, *Mimesis as Make-Believe*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.

states in music without feeling them ourselves while listening. ... Cognitivists, like other music lovers, may be moved by the beauty of a piece of a performance or even by the beautiful way in which piece expresses some garden-variety emotion. What they deny is that such an emotion is expressed via its arousal in listeners. (1995: 47,51)

Leo Tolstoy envisioned art as essentially a form of communication. Art is meant to communicate universal emotion, which is felt by the artist and is the subject of her work, and is then communicated to her audience. Without this communication, the expression of emotion through that artwork is incomplete. Without an audience which reconstructs the emotions of the artist through the medium of her creation, there is no art. Art is not, for Tolstoy, simply the "spontaneous overflow of emotion." Mere expression of emotion, just an outpouring of the emotion or of the articulation of the emotion of the artist, is insufficient. Communication is key; art is about the relationship itself of artist to audience. (1960)

Unlike Tolstoy, Benedetto Croce was less concerned with details like sincerity, infectiousness, and religious climate, than he was with an investigation of the actual mechanics of expression itself. How does an artist express through artistic creation? What does she express? "Feeling" was much too ambiguous a term for Croce. Art could not be a matter of mere expression of emotions. What were expressed were not feelings but *intuitions*.[8] For Croce, aesthetics is the science of images or intuitive knowledge. Aesthetic experience is one form of cognitive experience. When we are conscious of the world, we are first conscious of what Croce calls raw sense impressions. When we clarify these, they become intuitions. And it is these intuitions that are the building blocks of artistic expression. To express these intuitions successfully is to create art. (Croce 1921)

R. G. Collingwood agrees with Croce in that it is naive to say that an artist merely expresses emotion. Collingwood sees the expression of emotion as having definite elements, some of the necessary ones being (1) that the emotion is not simply mentioned to the audience, but is *demonstrated* to them, (2) the emotion is individualized, is this emotion here and now, not just one of a species, say, of happiness or sadness, and (3) the expression is not simply for the arousal of emotion; the expression of emotion which is art is not manipulative. Without complete honesty on the part of the artist, the expression can be nothing other than merely manipulative, or, worse, simply without feeling. On the other hand,

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[8] For Croce, an "intuition" is an inner vision of an image. It is an immediate knowledge through the contemplation of that image by the imagination of the perceiver. It is the most basic and most fundamental operation of mental activity.

the artist must handle the emotion she is expressing delicately; she must not rant or rave (Collingwood accused Beethoven of this). (1938)

We see in the historical movement from Tolstoy through Croce to Collingwood a progression of greater importance of and reliance on the cognitive. This is so much the case, that cognitivist expressionists might cite Collingwood as a member of their camp. Arousal and communication theories give way to cognitivist theories, but the difference between these two versions of expressionism are less important than one item which they both centrally retain: the importance of the position and role of the artist in art expression. Monroe Beardsley writes:

> The key distinction, it seems to me, has to do with the way a theory of art connects two concepts: (1) what the artwork expresses, and (2) what the *artist* expressed. Essential to an Expression Theory is that it explains (1) in terms of (2); it is the act or process of expression that is basic, and statements about the expression in the work carry an implicit reference to the expressing agent.[9]

Expressionist theories turn on the centrality of the artist. Unlike the case with representation, invocation of the artist, of her intentions, emotions, intuitions (a la Croce), ideas, and so forth, are not relegated to ancillary issues, say, of evaluation. In this approach, the artist's expression is the core of the artwork; in some sense and certainly in some theorist's views, it is appropriate to say that the artist's expression *is* the artwork.

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[9] Monroe C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1981, xli. For the sake of completeness and honesty, Beardsley finishes the paragraph in the following way: "On the opposed view, one can still find occasion to speak of an artist as expressing something (although this idiom may be misleading and thus thought avoidworthy), but the act of expression will be regarded, roughly, as the act of creating something expressive. Thus (2) is explained in terms of (1): The basic notion is still that the work has its own forms and qualities, and our relationship to which them in no way depends on any assumptions about their creation or creator."

The Argument

The argument here turns on the positions and roles of the various elements involved in art production and art consideration. Representationist theories hold the artwork—the object or event itself—as central to the establishment of the object's being a work of art. Expressionist theories place the artist, and her particular expression, as central. In any interpretation of a work of art, there is a three-part relationship—this is even more evidently the case in interpretation than in the establishment of a thing as a work of art. You need an artwork, an artist, and an audience (although, just for the sake of care, we will continue to say that the audience can be the artist herself). Interpretation, then, takes the form, if my descriptive account above is accurate, of offering an explanation, an explanation that deeply, simply, comprehensively, and coherently explains the presence of the aspects of a particular work of art, both individually and collectively. An interpretation is an explanation that focuses on coherence among the various parts of the artwork: how well is the presence of the various aspects of this work explained, or motivated, by understanding them in relation to their delivering a message the content of which is about X (X being this particular interpretation).

We can know two additional things from these points. First, interpretation is essentially a matter of communication. There is a clear receiver: the audience. But the sender is less clear. The sender of this communication could be the work itself. This is the position of New Critics like Cleanth Brooks and Formalist theorists like Wimsatt and Beardsley. Or the sender could be the artist. This is clearly Tolstoy's view. Or the sender could be the audience itself, which through the medium of the artwork, communicates something to itself. Theories which focus very heavily on audience reception, like Deconstructionism, might hold such a position. But in all these cases, interpretation is something received by the audience, delivered by way of the artwork (at least, generally speaking), and sent by any one of the three relational elements.

The second thing we can know is that there is a content to this communication. The communication's content is the content of the interpretation: the explanation, the message (if using that term does not beg the question), or the theme. If interpretation is seen in this way, as essentially a matter of communication, the roles adopted by the artist, artwork, and audience take on a larger significance.

What is the communicative content of the interpretation when the role of the artist is focal? That content is about her expression, about what she means to express, about some emotion, intuition, or thought she discloses, exposes, instantiates, voices, or conveys.

What is the communicative content when the role of the artwork is focal? I want to suggest that the role is to present a representation of something, to depict, resemble, denote, signify, or to pick-out something. The content of this representation, given the history of theories about representation, can be very wide indeed. We are no longer restrained by an ancient view of representation as resemblance. The artwork could represent a thought, an emotion, an object, an event, a state, a proposition, and on and on. If interpretation is communication where there is a message or theme to be delivered, the artwork represents that message.

What is the communicative content when the role of the audience is focal? Again, I want to suggest that the content is representational. The artwork can stand for something simply and uniquely in relation to an audience member, thereby representing for that audience member, that interpreter, something particular either about him or about him in particular relation to that work. If this is possible, and contemporary literary theory certainly suggests that it is, then the audience can represent, through the medium of consideration or attention to the artwork, something about itself.

Concrete Examples

Does my position hold water? In order to see, let's consider three run-of-the-mill art interpretations. First we will consider the two film interpretations of *2001: A Space Odyssey* offered above. Then we will consider an interpretation of Martha Graham's modern dance oeuvre. Finally, we will consider an interpretation of a work by Rothko.

I. The *2001* interpretations were these:

> I-1: One interpretation of *2001: a Space Odyssey* holds that the film is about the evolution of human beings, and how humans are assisted in their evolution through the deliberate, though passive, efforts of some more evolved group of beings, or at least through their instruments, the big black monoliths. The human move from being animals to being tool-and-weapon wielders is occasioned by the presence, and the touching of, one of the monoliths. The move from David Bowman being an ordinary human being to being a giant space fetus is occasioned by the presence, and the touching of, one of the monoliths. "We are not alone, and thank goodness for that."

1-2: Another interpretation of *2001* holds that the film is a Garden of Eden myth, where the monolith functions as an analogue of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil—although, admittedly, Kubrick is fairly morally opaque in the film. The monolith, and its importation of knowledge, arrives, and the monkey-men are then in possession of the ability to kill and wage war. With each further visit to a monolith, additional knowledge is gained, and with that additional knowledge, humans are changed forever—not necessarily to the better.

II. Joan Acocella, the New Yorker's current principal dance critic, writes about the work of Martha Graham in "Early Spring," an article about the evolution of the Martha Graham Dance Company since Graham's death in 1991:

Graham was, in large measure, the founder of modern dance, and also, to many, its greatest practitioner, the author of a form of theatre that, for the first time, brought American dance in line with modernism. Her dancers felt they had to defend her high standing. But it wasn't just her reputation that was so exalted. Her work drew on Jung, on Greek mythology, on Rilke and Dante. It was grandiose, soul-delving, aimed, as she said, at illuminating "the interior landscape." It was of a time, and a tone, with Eugene O'Neill, William Faulkner, D. H. Lawrence.[10]

III. I had not considered the work of Rothko much beyond a mere understanding of how he fit into the place of modern art until I saw the famous Sister Wendy discuss his work. She says of Rothko:

I'm not afraid you won't think this Mark Rothko beautiful, but what I am afraid, a little, somebody might think it's just beautiful. Lovely colors. No meaning. But meaning is what he was all about, and he would have been furiously angry if anyone thought that, and told you so in suitably salty language. It was subject matter that mattered most to him. And the subject matter was the emotions. Not small, personal emotions—up today, down tomorrow—but the great timeless emotions. How we feel about death, and courage, and ecstacy. He was convinced that if you would just encounter his paintings, that emotion would be communicated to you with absolute clarity. So to achieve this he painted very large. Because in a small painting—big you, little painting—you can control it. But with a large painting, it controls you. You're taken into it. Unless of course you look at it from a distance, that killing, assessing look. So to combat that, he insisted that always the light be very dim,

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[10] Joan Acocella, "Early Spring: The Martha Graham Dance Company Returns to New York," *The New Yorker*, February 17 & 24, 2003, 202-203.

so you couldn't actually see the thing until you were right up against it. And then something does begin to happen. He painted with very thin mists of paint, feathering it on, breathing it on. And you are taken up, out of yourself, into something greater, something transcendent and majestic. If you can think of a religious painting without religion, this is what you experience here. It's so timeless, that when I've had this encounter, I feel to return to the world of time, I have to shake my head and bring myself down to earth again. (Beeket, 1996)

I have chosen these interpretations on the following criteria: they were instantly available to me; I presume they will be immediately accessible to readers of this essay; they were short; and they were from three separate artforms. I do not offer these examples as evidence for my claim, but rather as examples.

The interpretations of *2001* seem to me obviously representational. The first offers an explanation of *2001* as a metaphor for the process of evolution, here helped along by outside forces. The second offers a metaphor for yet another story (whether the Biblical story of the Fall of Humans is itself a metaphor or a record of history is something I do not want to get into here); the second picks out the representational nature of *2001* as standing for the Fall of Humans. I think part of the attraction of these interpretations as interpretations is exactly that they seem to present their citation of the representational qualities of the film so obviously. Aristotle's insight that people naturally delight in works of imitation is as true today as ever. This delight, I want to claim, translates into attraction toward interpretations which focus on representational qualities of artworks.

Acocella, in understanding the work of Graham, says that she "drew on Jung, on Greek mythology, on Rilke and Dante. It was grandiose, soul-delving, aimed, as she said, at illuminating 'the interior landscape'." While Acocella considers what Graham herself said about her body of work, the expectation is that, if challenged, Acocella would evidence her claims directly from the dances themselves, by pointing to particular dances and elements in particular dances. In each evidencing case, Acocella would offer mimetic accounts of how something in the Graham dance represented something out of Jung, Greek mythology, and the rest. Acocella's evidence would be, exclusively, about either the representational or expressive qualities of Graham's work.

If the *2001* interpretations and the Graham interpretation do not offer much of a challenge, then let's move on to Sister Wendy's take on the Rothko work. Rothko's work is abstract, and many will claim that it is abstract in the extreme (as, say, compared with Kandinsky or Chagall). One might then expect that

representational interpretations might not be forthcoming. But it is exactly a representational interpretation that Sister Wendy offers. Indeed, the fear from which she suffers is that one will only see the work in purely formal ways: "Lovely colors. No meaning." One could say that her invocation of Rothko's reaction to a "no-meaning" approach to the work is to rely on artist intentions, but this only strengthens the claim that it is either the representational OR expressive qualities that need to appear in interpretations. Can one interpret Rothko in a purely formalist way? I think not, and I think Sister Wendy puts her finger on this when she says "Lovely colors. No meaning."

The Formalist Challenge

There is a strong Formalist tradition, supported by the work of Wimsatt and Beardsley in their treatment of the Intentional Fallacy, that states that it is entirely unnecessary to know what was in the mind of the artist when she was creating the work in order to correctly interpret that work. We ought not appeal to the intentions of the artist in order to explain the meaning of the work; instead we ought to consult the objective features of the work. Through an examination of the properties of the object, its formal relations, one can come to a clear understanding of what the object means. The intention of the artist is unnecessary for fixing the meaning of the work.

The case offered by Wimsatt and Beardsley did not go unanswered. Some theorists, such as Kendall Walton, (1970: 334-367) believe that Wimsatt and Beardsley, and the Formalists they represent, go too far. While Walton and others might agree that the artist's intentions are not the only source of developing good interpretations, they suggest that it is at least one avenue. And, indeed, most of us would tend to listen to the artist describe the meaning of her work well before we would listen to someone else.

Some who disagree with the Formalists do so because they believe that intentions need not be had first-hand from the artist herself in order to be considered the artist's intentions. Some believe that we are able, in many cases, to determine the artist's intention without the artist even being alive. It is a safe bet to believe that Picasso's intention in creating *Guernica* was to show the horror of war. The problem with such speculation, says the Formalist, is that it seems to rely solely and fully on the properties of the work for determining the artist's intention. If one is simply relying on the object's properties to give clues as to the artist's intention, then why not simply skip the intermediate step and say

that the interpretation is based on the work's features? Why not simply say that the work's features, through direct consideration of them, give rise to the interpretation?

The Formalist case presents a problem for the Expressionist-Interpreter, the person who references the author in his interpretation of a given work. Does it also present a problem for the Representationist-Interpreter? With but a little extension of Formalism, it can be seen to. If the Formalist is successful in saying that it is possible to interpret a work of art in the absence of any reference to the artist, and if the Formalist can go on to say that it is possible to interpret a work of art in the absence of any reference to what the work represents, then my thesis is wrong. Formalism in its heart is focused exclusively on consideration of the formal aspects of the artwork. What is "form"? Alan Goldman describes it this way:

> Form is the basest (nonevaluative sense) of the base properties, the type of property on which most other aesthetic properties ultimately depend. ... [T]he unproblematic definition of is that form consists in relations among elements of works, relations constituting some intelligible order of these elements. Form related units on various levels into larger groups or whole that can be grasped in the course of experiencing a work. (1995: 82-83)

It would seem that an interpretative examination of a given work could make reference strictly to the formal aspects of that work, thereby avoiding reference to expressionist or representational aspects of the work altogether. This is a problem for my view.

I would argue, however, that it is not an insurmountable problem. In order to provide for a possible Formalist objection to my position, I have suggested that perhaps an *interpretative* analysis is possible on purely formal grounds. Surely Formalists believe that this is the case in regard to avoiding referencing artistic intentions. This is their negative thesis, but Formalists do not talk in positive terms about what would go into a Formalist interpretation of a work. While some Formalists (though not Beardsley, it should be noted) may hold that artworks can be examined exclusively by reference to their formal aspects, the examination they are talking about is one focused on the aesthetic merits of the work. Aesthetic evaluation may be possible on purely Formalist grounds (although I doubt it), and interpretation may be possible in the complete absence of reference to artist intentions, but none of this entails that interpretation is possible on purely Formalist grounds.

I would argue that it is not. Interpretation, if the way I have characterized it is sound, is inherently evaluative. What one means to do in the offering of a (good) interpretation is to provide hearers of the interpretation with a perspective which will enhance their aesthetic experience of the work being interpreted.[11] On this view, there is a goal to interpretation construction, and that goal is the having of richer experiences. Purely formal aspects, if we, like Goldman, treat formal relations as "the basest of the base properties," are strictly, definitionally nonevaluative.

Consider Beardsley's own take on what constitutes an aesthetic property:

> The alternative that remains is to say that a distinguishing feature of A-qualities [aesthetic qualities] is their intimate connection with normative critical judgments—or, more explicitly (though still tentatively and roughly), that an A-quality of an object is an aesthetically valuable quality of that object. On this proposal, what guides our linguistic intuition in classifying a given quality as an A-quality is the implicit intuition in classifying a given quality as an A-quality is the implicitly recognition that it could be cited in a reason supposing a judgment (affirmative or negative) of aesthetic value .... This proposal has another advantage ... to give a reason in support of a judgment of a work—or of any object, considered from the aesthetic point of view—you have to cite a quality of that object or of some part of it.[12]

Goldman argues that this connection with aesthetic value places aesthetic properties in line with their most popular linguistic use, viz. as offering a defense or a justification for a particular broad evaluative claim about a work or natural object/event (that the object is beautiful, for instance). This also ties together aesthetic properties with the meanings and interpretations of the work. A detailed articulation of the meaning of a work will inevitably cite aesthetic properties, properties that contribute to the validity of the interpretation being articulated,

and given that an interpretation may well be thought of as a vehicle for enhancing appreciation of an artwork, such citations will pick out aesthetically valuable aspects of the work.

Reference to the purely formal aspects of a work will not include mention of aesthetic properties, as Beardsley, Goldman, and it should be added for good measure, Sibley conceive of them. (1959: 421-450) But interpretations, if Goldman is right, must. The upshot is that the Formalist does not have an objection to advance against my thesis. Of course, this is a negative claim; whether citation of aesthetic properties in the construction of an art interpretation necessarily includes reference to representation (leaving aside reference to artistic expression, for the sake of the Formalist) is another matter, one I will take up directly.

If there is any hope for an interpretation which does not involve, necessarily, citation of either the representational or expressive qualities of the work in question, such hope would seem to rest in works of art that are purely abstract.[13] In visual abstract art, we might well look to painters like Rothko, Pollack, Robert Motherwell and Piet Mondrian. But perhaps already we need to leave out Mondrian: some of his best known works are parts of series, two of which are named "Trees" and "Scaffolding," and these clearly carry with them representational references. This is probably why Pollack is known to have deliberately avoided naming his work as the style he is known for matured; he most probably wished to avoid attaching the representational to his work. Instead of Mondrian, perhaps we could include in the list the minimalists Agnes Martin and Frank Stella. If painters like these cannot evoke interpretations which are not representational or expressionist, then no visual artist can.

Unfortunately, a representational theory of art has been offered which explicitly deals with purely abstract and minimalist art. It is that of Nelson Goodman. Goodman theorizes that art is essentially symbolic. A given work of art functions as a symbol (or sign), or a set of symbols. Goodman differentiates between art symbol systems and non-art symbol systems, of course, but in the resulting account, Goodman offers a way even to understand the sort of art we are talking about here representationally. A given patch of color, so the view goes, *exemplifies* the particular color of which it is an instance; this Goodman

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[11] As well as being my view, this is Goldman's view, too. He argues for it in: Alan H. Goldman, "On Interpreting Art and Literature," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 48, 1990, 205-214

[12] Monroe C. Beardsley, "What is an Aesthetic Quality?" *Theoria* 39, 1973, 61, 65. Goldman agrees with Beardsley: "Aesthetic properties are those which contribute to the aesthetic values of artworks (or, in some cases, to the aesthetic values of natural objects of scenes). ... We might conclude that works of art are objects created and perceived for their aesthetic values, and that aesthetic properties are those which contribute to such values." Alan H. Goldman, "Properties, Aesthetic," *A Companion to Aesthetics*, ed. David Cooper, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995. See also: Alan H. Goldman, "Aesthetic Qualities and Aesthetic Value," *Journal of Philosophy* 87, 1990, 23-37.

[13] Music is another rich area for exploration, but I will leave that to others like Goldman, Kivy, and Levinson: Goldman, "Aesthetic Value," 46-82. Peter Kivy, *Sound Sentiment*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989, and *Music Alone*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990. Jerrold Levinson, *Music, Art, and Metaphysics*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994.

understands as reference. So long as the color refers, then we can understand that artwork-instantiated patch of color as representational.

Whether this theory actually succeeds is probably something worth investigating (and so, some have), but as long as we have a means for understanding the most abstract work as referential, then we have a theory to use as a basis for interpretation of this sort of work. This may not alone be enough to win the day, but coupled with my earlier rejection of purely formalist interpretation, this at least puts the ball in the other guy's court; the burden of proof is on the rejecter of my view.

10
Expression in Indian Grammatology, Linguistics, Poetics and Dramaturgy

Ananta Ch. Sukla

There are some Sanskrit terms such as *prakāśa* and (*abhi*) *vyakti* that encounter the English term *expression* in its conceptual perspectives. Both the terms have been used originally for explaining the linguistic function as self-revelation, and, derived from the roots *kāś* and *vyañj* respectively, they mean to manifest, appear visibly, make open and public, *kāś* with a specific emphasis on shining or illuminating.

I

As early as the 7th century B.C. Yāska, the celebrated Vedic lexicographer, considers linguistic signification (*śabdena sañjñākaraṇam*) as the most precise (*āṇiyastva*) and comprehensive (*vyāptimattva*) mode of communication among people (*vyavahārārthe loke*) in comparison with other modes such as gestures and postures. (*Nirukta*, I.2) Linguistic competence is therefore the characteristic sign of knowledge, and one who lacks it lacks illumination like a dry log of wood or an extinguished fire. Thus linguistic signification is an illumination (*dīpti*), and, instead of being a stable (*sthāṇu*) phenomenon, it is always in a moving process—a dissemination. Yāska grounds his observation on the derivation of the word *artha* (meaning / signification) from the root *ar* meaning to go, to move. To the effect, Yāska quotes two stanzas from the *Ṛgveda* (X.71.4-5):

> Seeing one does not see speech, hearing one does not hear it. And to another she yielded her body like a well-dressed and loving wife to her husband. They certainly declare one to be steadfast in friendship, him no one can overpower in

conflicts (of debates). But that man wonders with a barren delusion; he listened to speech that is without fruit or flower. (I. 19-20)

The stanzas suggest the self-illuminating/self-manifesting / self-revealing character of signification. Speech reveals herself not to an incompetent man who fails to understand and appreciate her in spite of his having sound auditory organs, but as the man who is competent linguistically. Yāska Comments:

> 'And to another she yielded her body', she reveals herself (svātmānam vivṛṇuti) for manifestation of the knowledge of signification (jñānaprakā-śanam arthasya) ... like a well-dressed and loving wife to her husband (well-dressed at proper season [ṛtukāla], dressed in an auspicious manner and loving), i.e. just as he (the husband) sees her and hears her at proper seasons: this is the praise of one who understands the meaning. (ibid. I.19).

According to Yāska, as quoted above, verbal cognition (arthajñāna) is possible only for a man with linguistic competence to whom speech reveals herself. The word prakāśa, that Yāska uses for the linguistic function derived from the root kāś, means illumination/ manifestation, and the word artha used for signification, is not a stable entity because, as the very root ar means, it is always in a disseminating process. Therefore no signification is complete or determinate, as its very revelation is in a continuous process of dissemination; there is no one-to-one relationship between the signifier and the signified. Accordingly, Yāska justifies homonyms and synonyms—that reject "the sovereignty of the signifier", helping us think of the creation of new descriptions, new vocabulary, new genres as essentially human activity. In this context, Patañjāli the celebrated grammarian (2nd c. B.C.) uses the term sampratyaya (comprehension / cognition) for the experience of the addressee. (Dasgupta, 1991: 6ff) According to Patañjāli, linguistic function involves three elements: utterance of the speaker, self-revelation of language itself in this utterance and the linguistic cognition of the addressee who is competent to experience the revelation of language (linguistic meaning) in the speaker's utterance. In support of his notion of the self-revealing character of language Patañjāli quotes three stanzas from the Ṛgveda including the ones quoted earlier by Yāska:

> It has four horns, three legs, two heads, seven hands, bound in three-wise, the bull bellows, the great deity has entered the dying ones. (Rv, IV; 58-3, 45)

Patañjāli explains: "Four horns are the four kinds of padas or nouns, verbs, prefixes and the particles. It has three feet (meaning) three times (tenses)—past, present and future. The two heads (are the) two types of words (external / impersonal/ Vedic) and the produced (by the people- laukika). Its seven hands—the seven declensions. Bounded three-wise (in three ways)—in three places—heart, throat and the head. 'The bull' (vṛṣabha from the root vṛṣ meaning to shower) because it showers. 'Bellows' because it makes sounds (the root ru meaning to sound). The great deaity entered the dying ones—the great deity is the word. The dying ones—men who are mortal. It entered them.
Similarly:

> The word is measured by four padas. Only the learned Brahmins know them. Three parts of it hidden in the cavern do not blow themselves; only the fourth part is spoken by men. (Rv, I; 164. 45)

In Patañjāli's explanation: "Words are only fourfold. The four kinds of padas are nouns, verbs, prefixes and particles. These are known only by learned Brahmins. He who collects (within him) the mind is called manīṣin (wise / learned). The three hidden in the cavern do not twinkle or move. It is only the fourth part of the speech that belongs to men. Turīya means the fourth." Dasgupta, the third stanza, that Patañjāli quotes from the Ṛgveda and explains it, is the same as that Yāska does earlier. All these three stanzas, according to both Yāska and Patañjāli, refer to language (śabda / vāk) as an entity that exists in an ethereal level independent of human utterance. A human speaker does not produce it. The material form of language in man's speech is the manifestation of this transcendental entity which reveals itself in physical form, i.e., sound. Even the whole of language is not expressed by man, out of four parts only the fourth one being accessible to men. (Sarup, 2002:64) The later writers such as Bhartṛhari (5th c. AD), the Kashmirian philosophers (9th-10th c. AD) and Nāgeśa (18th c AD) interpret the four parts of language slightly differently. Bhartṛhari counts three parts – the phenomenal (vaikhari: belonging to vikhara the phenomenal world, spoken by man), the intuitive (paśyantī: derived from the root dṛś [to see] with present participle suffix) and the middle one (madhyamā) that mediates between the phenomenal and intuitive levels of language. To common man only the phenomenal level of language is accessible whereas the other two require specific linguistic competence. Bhartṛhari does not speak of the fourth form. But it is implied by his writings that the ultimate Reality, the mahodeva of the Vedic stanza, the great deity Vṛṣabha, is this highest form of language that he calls

Śabdabrahman. (Iyer, 1969: 142-146) Bhartrhari was followed by the Kashmirian philosophers who count four forms or levels of language naming his Śabdabrahman as *parāvāk*, the other three remaining the same. Nāgeśa follows these Kashmirians in interpreting this issue.

Evidently, for the grammarians, language is not *produced* by man, but *used* by him. Even the whole of language cannot be used by him, only a part of it. Man expresses language not in pressing out anything that belongs to his (inner) subject but expresses language in the sense of manifesting it, as though a lamp manifested an object that remained unmanifest in darkness. Besides, this expression is never complete, even in the phenomenal level, not to speak of the other three levels because, as Yāska has made the point sufficiently clear, there is always an unending scope for the expression of linguistic signification.

II

Next to the grammarians, the Vedic exegetes pinpoint this manifesting function of conflate. Almost contemporary to Patañjāli, Jaimini composed his aphorisms on the linguistic comprehension of the Vedic texts, and a century later Śabara wrote a commentary on Jaimini. Both these authors constitute a school of thought called (*pūrva / earlier*) Mīmāṁsā because of its (supposed) resolutions or dispositions of the problems regarding the interpretation of the Vedic texts, particularly the language of injunctions (*vidhi*) and prohibitions (*niṣedha*) used in the sacrifices. The word *Mīmāṁsā* is the desirative form (*sanant*) of the root *man* meaning primarily a "desire to know" (*jijñāsā*), an enquiry into the nature of knowledge and truth that leads man to attain the highest goal (*dharma*) of life. By implication, this *enquiry* also means *resolution* of the problems concerning *dharma*, the nature of this phenomenon itself and the (Vedic) language that explains or interprets it.

According to Śabara (as also his commentator Kumārila, 8th c.) *dharma* means both the good or the good results, *puruṣārtha*, the purpose or the ultimate goal of man, a kind of delight (*prīti*) that is available in heaven (*svarga*), as well as by the Vedic sacrifices by means of which only man attains this delight. Thus Śabara writes:

> That in which man(finds) *prītih* (that is to say) that significant thing (*padārtha*) which when accomplished gives rise to *prītih*, that significant thing / is known as *puruṣārtha*. Why? The innate longing for it (is) caused by *artha*; the innate longing for it (is) due to *artha* alone. But *kratvartha* is known from Scripture,

not from anywhere else. For *puruṣārthah* is not unconnected with *prītih*. Whatever brings about *prītih*, that is *puruṣārthah*. *Puruṣārthah* being (thus) described, *kratvartha* (is said to be) its opposite. Thus the description of *kratvartha*, too, is accomplished. (D'sa, 1980: 22)

Prīti or *puruṣārtha*, i.e., heavenly (or some sort of transphenomenal) happiness *kratvartha*, the object of *kratu* (sacrifice) and the process of this *kratu* (the practices of sacrifice as directed by the Vedic injunctions) are all counted under *dharma*. Svarga is identified with *prītih*, that is to say, *svarga* is a phenomenological ontology that subsists only in the experience of the subject (man). Therefore, *puruṣārthah*, according to Śabara is a phenomenological entity. It has no existence independent of the subject's consciousness. Śabara clarifies his ideas on the primacy of this *prītih* to which sacrifice (*yāgakratu / kratvartha*), as its means, is secondary:

> If (*svarga*) denotes *prītih*, (then) *yāgah* becomes secondary (and) *prītih* (becomes) primary. How? Because a person's efforts are for that purpose (*tādarthyāt*). For a person strives for *prītih* hence we know *prītih* cannot be the means for *yāgah* ... And if *yāgah* were not for the purpose of *prītih*, the act would not be performed, there would be no performer (at all). For what is for the sake of *prītih*, that is performed, nothing else. (D'sa, *ibid.* 23)

Both Jaimini and Śabara correlate several notions in the discourse on language (I.1): action, the object of action and language that signifies the action. Action is the performance of sacrifice, *prīti* is the goal / result / object of this sacrifice, and finally, this sacrifice otherwise called *dharma* is signified by the scriptural injunction (*codanā*). Thus scriptural injunction is the signifier and its signified (*artha*) is sacrifice or *dharma* that begets *prīti* for the sacrificer. Both the theologians use two words for the nature of signification – *vācya* and *lakṣaṇa*, the former is denotation and the latter is indexical signification: the corresponding roots *vac* and *lakṣ* are used synonymously, although they are of different types of signification. In explaining Jaimin's aphorism *codanā lakṣaṇortha dharmah* (I-1.2) Śabara interprets *lakṣaṇa* as an indexical signification, such as "smoke signifies fire" (*dhumo lakṣaṇam agneh*). It seems, at this stage, the subtle difference between denotation and indication as two distinct functions of language or two distinct semiotic functions were unnoticed. But what was significantly noticed is the view that the signified (*dharma*) is manifested (*abhi-vyañj*), not produced (*utpanna*) the manifesting agency being the sound vibration (*nāda*) uttered by speaker. A difference between word (*śabda*) and sound-vibration (*nāda*) has

been demonstrated. A word is not merely an acoustic image, rather its agency (*nāda*) is of such category, because it varies from person to person, occasion to occasion whereas the verbal signifier is itself a stable, eternal phenomenon that manifests the signifier, being itself manifested by the sound vibrations. *Śabda*, therefore, interpreted in its extended sense, i.e., the spoken language, is an imperishable phenomenon, and in its two classifications, scriptural and non-scriptural, functions differently. The scriptural linguistic function is directive / injunctive, and therefore transcends temporality and perceptuality. No individual can verify the scriptural cognition by any means of empirical experience that are confined to time and space. *Śabda* transcends proof (*apramāṇa*), and in the scriptural language the sign system is natural (*nitya*) not arbitrary (*anitya*), this arbitrariness being applicable only to the language of common people who compose it and deconstruct. The scriptural language is not authored by any individual, the names cited therein being only those of excellent exponents.

Some critical terms, and concepts emerge in the theological vocabulary: *prīti*, *lakṣaṇa*, *dharma*, *artha*, *codanā* and *bhāvanā*. *Prīti* refers to a transcendental delight obtained by the performance of sacrifices that are called *yāga* or *dharma*. *Dharma* is determined by the Vedic text called *Brāhmaṇa* which operates by signifying (*lakṣaṇa*) an injunction (*codanā*) through imperative mood. Sanskrit verbs have ten moods (modes) called *lakāra* signified by suffixes. What is signified by a root is an act, and what is signified by a mood is a *bhāvanā*: bringing the act into existence, the word itself derived from the root *bhū* meaning *to exist*. The Sanskrit words *bhāva* and *bhāvanā*, derived from the root *bhū*, therefore do not simply mean existence, but *brought* or *bringing* into existence both mental and physical. In the mental form, *bhāva* and/ or *bhāvanā* are ideas, thoughts, thinking as also emotions and, in the physical form they mean accomplishment of action.

Bhāvanā is of two types: that which is actualized materially or objectively is *ārthī* (pertaining to object / *artha*) consisting of three factors: *sādhya* (the intended object to be brought about, e.g. heavenly delight), *sādhana* (instruments or means of bringing about (sacrifice or *yāga*) and *itikartavyatā* (the process or course of performance). On the other hand, *śābdi bhāvanā* is the texts of injunction that goad one to perform the sacrifices for attaining the desired object (*artha*). This is otherwise called *abhidhā bhāvanā*, an ideation or thought process and when carried out in action, this thought process is also *bhāvanā* in its material or physical mode. The word *pacati* ("does the cooking"), a thought process carried out in action, brings cooked rice into existence.

According to the school of exegesis, Vedas are the only sources of knowledge and they are the linguistic texts classified under two heads according to the nature of speech acts they contain—assertive (*abhidhāna*, *abhidhāna codaka*) and injunctive (*codanā lakṣaṇa*, *Mimāṁsā Sūtra* II. 1.31-33) that are called *mantra* and *brāhmaṇa* respectively. The assertive expressions (*abhidhāna*) called *mantra* are not performative themselves, do not express any act, but are capable of being applied in performance. The other class of the Vedic text, called *brāhmaṇa*, is always performative. Thus *codanā lakṣaṇa* (I.I.2) and *abhidhāna codaka* (II-1. 31-33) are distinguished, and consequently two different terms for explaining linguistic signification emerge—*abhidhāna* and *lakṣaṇa* though not critically distinguished at this stage. But the term *abhi-vyāñj* meaning revelation explains the function of both *abhidhāna* and *lakṣaṇa*.

Although derived from the same root *cud*, *codaka* and *cadanā* are used differently in this context. *Codaka* means that which triggers (an assertion) whereas *codanā* means injunction. The knowledge by injunction, Śabara asserts, exceeds all our knowledge of sense experience extending over past, present and future. (I.1.2) Similarly, although Śabara explains *lakṣaṇa* as indexical signification in I.1.2—"Smoke indicates fire"—the term also means linguistic signification by indirection or inference and, as such, it appears distinguished from *abhidhāna*.

But the *brāhmaṇa* section of the Vedic text is not always injunctive. There are also some descriptive or declamatory portions that eulogize or command the injunctive terms, and, as such, these texts are injunctive indirectly. By saying "parents are most respectable" one does indeed say "we should respect parents". In the Vedic context, by saying "Vāyu is the effect deity", it is instructed that one should offer sacrifice to Vāyu. Accordingly, these declamatory texts (*artha-vāda*) have three-fold classification—(a) direct description "Fire is the antidote for cold", (b) indirect description—"During the day, the smoke alone of the fire is perceived, not its light" and (c) description of a past or accomplished event—"Prajāpati cut out his own omentum". Śabara counts several other modes of description (II.1.33) such as by using the particle '*iti*', the phrase "so they say", stating a reason, doubt, description that are historical (*purākalpa*), anecdotal, commendatory, explanatory and condemnatory. On the other hand, some linguists recommend only the injunctive sentences as sources of knowledge (of *dharma*) not the descriptive ones. But the exegetes plead for a coordination of both the injunctive and declamatory texts in consturing the *brāhmaṇa* portion of the Vedas meaningful. Apart from etymology, context, subsequent description and commendatory texts should also be taken into account in the verbal function (*vṛtti*) (Jha, chap.20).

The verbal function, according to the exegetes, is a *revelation* of the relation between the word and its meaning, and this relation is called "expression" (*ab-hivyañj*) where the "pressing out" image of an inner by a human agency is absent. In other words, verbal function is not an *externalization* of an internal *phenomenon* by any personal or individual efforts. When uttered, language expresses / reveals itself, and what it reveals is the relation between the signifier (*śabda*) and the signified (*artha*), i.e., the *saṅketa* that might be eternal (*ājānika*) or man-made/modern (*ādhunika*). By understanding this relation as eternal or God-made the orthodox philosophers (reasonably) consider the ahistorical origin of language, allowing also the historical origin or some of its areas that the psycho-social and educational contexts demand. Even this modern or man-made *saṅketa* is structurally the same as the *ājānika saṅketa*, because in floating the modern one man cannot but follow the eternal one. Structurally, the linguistic system is only one: as the Vedic stanzas quoted above suggest, language expresses itself, not in pressing out anything inner in it, but in revealing its very form that has no inner-outer division. It is not that some language is divine, and other human; language as such is divine. Nobody can trace its origin phenomenally. Patañjāli assumes that word, idea and object are distinct entities, and though they are interrelated in our ordinary experience, they may be separated from one another by a process of abstraction. What this assumption implies is the fact that, although we use language for understanding and experiencing the phenomenal world we live in, language itself is not phenomenal, nor is it meant for/ consists in man's use only. It is a self-determined entity that manifests its own world in various forms according to its own will. According to Bhartṛhari, only a sentence is a complete linguistic phenomenon, an indivisible integral linguistic form, and the words, its parts such as nouns, verbs and the individual formations by roots, suffixes and prefixes are only relative to a sentence without having any absolute value or reality in themselves, although studying them in all their details is absolutely important for a full-fledged study of language.

Bhartṛhari also offers a very precise account of the physicality of language by synthesizing several views of the different schools of philosophy: Kunjuni Raja summarizes his view:

> First, we have the actual sounds of the words uttered; this is the *vaikṛta-dhvani*. These sounds reveal the permanent *prākṛta-dhuani* which is an abstraction from the various *vaikrita-dhvani-s*, or which may be considered as the linguistically normal form devoid of the personal variations which are linguistically irrelevant. The third stage is the *sphoṭa* which is the whole utterance considered as an integral unit, as an indivisible language-symbol. It is this *sphoṭa*

that reveals the meaning which is in the form of an intuition. Strictly both the *sphoṭa* and the meaning are different aspects of the same speech-principle. Bhartṛhari seems to synthesize these various aspects of speech with the three-fold nature of the revelation of speech: *paśyanti*, *madhyamā* and the *vaikharī* stages, corresponding respectively to *sphoṭa*, *prākṛta-dhvani* and *vaikṛta-dhvani*. (1963: 14-15)

There is a striking difference between the knowledge by sense experience and that by verbal function. Sense experience is due to the direct contact of the sense organs with the object concerned whereas verbal cognition is due to the knowledge of the relation between the signifier and the signified (*saṅketa*) and this knowledge of *saṅketa*, the knowledge due to the primary semantic function is called *abhidhā*. In other words, *Saṅketa* causes the primary semantic function, because the signifier has necessary qualification for its relation with its signified so that signification is *caused*. Just any signifier cannot be related to any signified.

Sanskrit poetics develops out of the grammatology of Yāska, Pāṇini, Patañjāli and Bhartṛhari through the linguistics of the Vedic exegetes Jaimini, Śabara and their interpreters during the 8th c. such as Kumārila, Prabhākara and their followers. The central issues that concern the poeticians move around the concept of *bhāvanā* as a general principle of bringing anything into existence and its three constituents—*sādhya*, *sādhana* and *itikartavyatā*. Accordingly, the key questions raised are, as intuited originally by *Yāska*, how does a discourse or narrative bring heavenly delight (*prīti*), as the Vedic sacrificial performance does otherwise. Yāska's statement, discussed above, implies that a discourse, by virtue of its metaphorical structure or function does so.

III

Accepting the flexibility of linguistic signification (*artha*) as viewed by Yāska, both the grammarians and exegetes demonstrate a secondary function of language called *lakṣaṇa* that is equally an illumination or revelation. The word is most possibly formed by adding a feminine suffix to the word *lakṣaṇa* used by the exegetes for signification in the Vedic (sacrificial directives in the *brāhmaṇa* portion) discourse. This secondary function is necessary in interpreting a text where the primary function is incapable of producing the desired meaning, and this function is possible either through similarity or through some other relation such as causality, proximity, whole-part relationship, association by substitution, behaviour, measurement so on and so forth. As a whole, this is a transfer of

meaning that includes the Western tropes of metaphor, metonymy and synechdoche. The logicians also support the relevance of this secondary function which they call *upacāra* (superimposition). A common example cited by Patañjali is *gaṅgāyām ghoṣaḥ* meaningless if interpreted through its literal or primary function, i.e., a hamlet cannot be located on the bed of (in) the river Ganges. So the locative case should mean "in the bank of (not on the bed of) the river." This interpretation is unanimously accepted.

Following this secondary function of *lakṣaṇā (lakṣyate* = inferred / implied) the literary critics of the 9th and 10th centuries propose a third or tertiary function which they call *vyañjanā*. Derived from the root *vyañj* (illumination/ manifestation) and in addition of a feminine suffix, this term, as its cognates *abhidhā* and *lakṣaṇā*, referes to a specific semantic potency. The Sanskrit word *śakti* meaning potency is in the feminine gender. Therefore the different categories of this potency – *abhidhā, lakṣaṇā*, and *vyañjanā* – also are used in feminine gender.

The literary critics argue that if two potencies are accepted relevantly, then why not a third one—since *artha* is in a constant movement? For example, in the said sentence, "a hamlet in the Ganges", the location of the hamlet is not the bed, but the bank of the river. Similarly, what more is revealed / illuminated / signified is that this hamlet is cool and sacred because of its association with the river Ganges. This *artha* due to a specific potency, i.e., *vyañjanā* may be called *vyaṅgya* on the analogy of two other potency-based categories *abhidheya* and *lakṣya*. The literary critics assign this meaning another name *dhvani* that they borrow from Patañjali. This third meaning is obviously not available in the other two semantic categories as discussed above. Along this line of linguistic function the literary critics argue that poetry is ontologically either an emotion, or an image or a fact that is illuminated / revealed (*vyakta/ abhivyakta*) by the linguistic cognition of the *vyaṅga* category. Further, they observe that since epistemologically, experience of images and facts ends in emotional response, poetry is a linguistic cognition that reveals / illuminates an emotion, and in this illuminated form (contra stated or implied form) this emotion is relished. Relish of an emotion this way is the experience of poetry. Thus the ontology and epistemology of poetry converge on the single linguistic point which is named *rasa* by this school of literary critics founded by Ānandavardhana (9th c.). Relish of emotion (*carvaṇā / āsvādana*) through linguistic illumination is correlated with the heavenly happiness through the sacrificial rituals, the happiness or beatitude named *prīti* by the exegetes, as also with the delight of the Vedic sages in illuminating the metaphorical truth through metaphorical narratives called *prīti* by Yāska (*ṛṣerdṛṣṭārthasya prītirbhavati ākhyānasamyuktā*, X.10). Thus the poetical *rasa*

(relish / beatitude) is epistemologically the same as the *prīti* of the lexicographer and exegetes. While drawing upon lexicography, grammar and exegesis Ānanda also draws upon the non-dualist Śaiva metaphysics of Vasugupta (8th c.) of Kashmir who founded his ideas of the ultimate Reality on the Tantric Kaula system correlated with the philosophy of language by Bhartṛhari. According to the Śaiva system, ultimate Reality is nothing other than universal consciousness that has two characteristics—*prakāśa* (self-illumination / manifestation / revelation) and *vimarśa* (free will). In its *prakāśa* aspect the ultimate Reality / Universal consciousness is the highest level of speech or *Parā Vāk* (*paśyantī* in Bhartṛhari's vocabulary). In its *vimarśa* aspect the ultimate Reality manifests itself, by its free will, in different gross material forms including both the *madhyamā* and *vaikharī* levels of language. Thus the ontological entity of both the immaterial and transcendental realities is linguistic revealed or illuminated by the *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* aspects of the absolute consciousness, i.e., Śabda Brahman. Kanti Chandra Pandey summarises this central issue as follows:

> This Self, the ultimate Reality, he (the Śaiva philosopher) conceives as "*prakāśavimarśamaya*". The universe also he broadly divides into substance and speech (*vācya* and *vācaka*); speech not as a mere physical phenomenon but as that of which the words are mere symbols. In fact the word "*vāk*" (speech) is used for the immaterial part of the universe, because the grossest form of *vimarśa* is distinguished from its other forms by its association with the physical sound which is its symbol and has a different physical substratum as opposed to the purely intellectual substratum of the idea. The substance is the grossest manifestation of the *prakāśa* aspect of the Universal Consciousness and the speech is that of the *vimarśa*. Thus, *Parā* is a distinctive name of the ultimate reality by which it is referred to when its *vimarśa* aspect is intended to be emphasized. The *Parā* is called speech (*śabdana*) not in its gross form in which we hear it, but in the most subtle one, like self-consciousness within. (1963:48)

Ānandavardhana quotes the following stanza from Hāla's *Gāthāsaptaśatī* (2.75) as an ideal example of poetry where the tertiary potency of language functions as illumination or revelation:

> Go your rounds freely, gentle monk;
> the little dog is gone.
> Just today from the thickets by the Godā
> came a fearsome lion and killed him. (Ingalls et al, p.83)

The literal (primary) meaning of this stanza is only too clear to need any interpretation, and there is nothing *poetic* here to be revealed or illuminated. But the context in which the stanza is spoken reveals the *artha* that neither the primary nor the secondary potency of language can make. Remarkably, the stanza contains no figures of speech—neither phonetic nor semantic: on the solitary bank of the river named Godā(varī) a woman waits for her lover regularly. But the solitude of the place is constantly disturbed by a monk who comes there (early in the morning) for plucking flowers. The woman now frightens him by saying that the little dog which was chasing him earlier is killed by a lion just this very day. So the assertion "Go your rounds freely" reveals the meaning "disperse immediately", a meaning generated neither by the *abhidhā* nor by the *lakṣaṇā* potency of language acknowledged by the philosophers earlier.

But this proposal for a tertiary meaning called revelation / illumination has been attacked by two eminent logicians of Kashmir—Jayanta Bhaṭṭa (10th c.) and Mahīmabhaṭṭa (10th – 11th c.). Jayanta does not even hesitate to call Ānanda an intellectual impostor (*paṇḍitammanya*) in his claim for exploring a third meaning or linguistic potency called *dhvani* (NM, 1971: 45). The said meaning is generated only by the contextual condition of the discourse concerned. Taken out of the context, the stanza would simply be denotative in its meaning. The source of the meaning that Ānanda calls *dhvani* (revelation / illumination) is not any other potency than the two already acknowledged by the tradition, but the syntactic function that Jayanta calls *tātparya vṛtti*, is a function (*vṛtti*) next (*para*) to the functions of the words (*tat*) such as *abhidhā* and *lakṣaṇā* (denotational and metaphorical). This function, Jayanta argues, is due to a specific potency of words (other than *abhidhā* and *lakṣaṇā*) that might be called *tātparyaśakti*. Jayanta, further argues that, words used in separation in different contexts of speech acts exercise their denotational and / or metaphorical properties independently. But innumerable meanings are generated by these words combined differently in different contexts(Sastri, 222. ft). Therefore, in the citation concerned, it is only the context that endows the denotational potency of language with the meaning what Ānanda calls *dhvani*.

On the other hand, Mahima argues that what Ānanda calls *vyakti* (or *abhivyakti* / *revelation* / *illumiation = pratīyamāna artha*) is nothing but a meaning by inference (*anumiti*): from the context concerned the addressee infers the negative meaning from the positive assertion. The woman has noticed that the monk was frightened by the chase of a dog. So, it is expected normally that he would stop coming over there when he is aware that instead of a little dog a lion now haunts the place.

An eminent logician, Mahima Bhaṭṭa, finds several defects with Ānanda's doctrine of *vyakti* / *abhivyakti* / *dhvani* / *pratiyamānārtha* in defining and explaining poetry as a distinguished discourse. (Krishnamoorthy, 1968: 268ff.) But in the present context, it is only this epistemology of language that occupies us critically.

In Indian logic *vyakti* also means a particular individual, retaining its derivation from the root *vyañj* meaning manifestation or embodiment of generality or common class characteristics (*jāti*). According to the logicians, a word with its denotational potency refers to a particular (*vyakti*) that manifests a generality along with a shape or form (*ākṛti*) whereas the exegetes acknowledge only the generality (*jāti*) as the referent. "According to Kumārula words denote universals and convey the individuals (*vyakti*) by secondary denotation. This position is endorsed by Mukulabhaṭṭa" (Sastri, 1959: 221) Significantly, some of the modern logicians along with Sāṅkhya dualists, hold that this *vyakti*, as the primary referant, is a perceptual phenomenon, not inferential. (Raja 1963: 71). Going a step further, Ānanda would hold that all kinds of semantic manifestations (*vyakti*) are perceptual phenomena. Therefore, the inferentiality of the semantic content of the poetic stanza quoted above is rejected. In a lengthy discourse (*Dh.A.* III. 33, Ingalls, 587-588) Ānandavardhana repudiates any role of inference in linguistic communication (*pratipādana*). In inference two elements are involved – the probandum (*linigī* i.e. fire) and the indexical sign (*liṅga*, i.e. smoke). If there is any role of inference in linguistic function / communication, then it is only this that from the sounds uttered we infer that the utterer is a living being and he wants to communicate something. But the semantic content of the sounds uttered is never inferred from the sounds. Linguistic cognition can here be compared with the knowledge of fire from its indexical sign i.e., smoke. There is no concomitant relationship between verbal sounds and their semantic content. The speaker's desire to communicate is inferred, but not the object or content of his communication which is always a perceptual experience. Further, it is not binding that a revealer (*vyañjaka*) be the index of a probandum, for example, a lamp reveals an object without being its indexical sign. Similarly, although the tertiary potency functions on the foundation of the primary or secondary potency, it cannot be said that there is any concomitant relation between the two sets of cognition as probandum and its means (*liṅgī – liṅga*).

Sometimes the user chooses to reveal his meaning by means of the word naturally attached to it and sometimes, out of regards to some special prompting, he chooses to reveal it as not denoted by its natural word. This twofold area of what can be communicated does not itself appear as a probandum (*liṅgin*,

something inferred) but as a term in some other sort of relation, either an artificial or a natural one. The fact that the meaning is something that the speaker intended to communicate is apprehended as a probandum, inferable from his words, but the meaning itself is not so apprehended. Although *vyakti (artha-vyakti)* or semantic function in general is manifestation, the poetic *vyakti* is of a higher level of the *paśyanti* type where the linguistic experience relishes its objects—facts, images and emotions—(*rasa*) in their indeterminate forms (*paśyanti*) whereas the other two categories of linguistic experience cognize them in their determinate (*pratīta*) forms. The former category of linguistic experience, the indeterminate one, is the creative function of human consciousness that transcends its subjective form and in its universal form; it is treated as a specific faculty of human intellect that experiences the ultimate truth by an intuitive flash. This faculty is called *pratibhā* by the Śaiva philosophers, borrowed from the philosophical vocabulary of Bhartṛhari. The term means literally "that which enlightens / shines forth (as derived from the root *bhu*) and is further interpreted as the human faculty that unfolds the truth in its myriad new forms (*nava-navonmeṣaśālinī prajñā*).

IV

Ānandavardhana's theory of poetry, as a specific kind of revelatory linguistic function manifesting facts, images and emotions, is amply augmented by his commentator Abhinavagupta (10th c.), a celebrated Kashmirian philosopher of the Śaiva school who correlated this linguistic model of manifestation in interpreting theatrical performance by way of writing a commentary on the dramatic treatise of Bharata (4th c. B.C. – 2nd c. AD). In his encyclopedic work on the theatre (*nātya*) titled *Nātyaśāstra*, Bharata defines this performing art as the representation of the three worlds—heaven, earth and the underworld—by means of the four constituents of acting (*abhinaya*)—physical (gestures and postures of the actors), verbal (dialogues), psychic (mental states displayed by facial signs) and costume in accompaniment of music as well. (*NS*: Chaps I and VI) The Sanskrit word *abhinaya* used for acting means to take something toward somebody (*abhi-nī-ac*). In the theatre, as Bharata understands and Abhinava endorses, an emotion is taken toward the audience in its relishable form that is called *rasa* (taste/ relish) in Sanskrit. Bharata uses the word *vyañjana* also to explain this *rasa* that is tasted or relished by the audience. In other words, the theatrical performance is like a *vyañjana* tasted by the audience. The word *vyañjana* is derived from the root *vyañj* (to manifest / reveal) from which the two words

vyakti and *abhi–vyakti* are derived. So all these words mean manifestation. *Vyañjana* is used for curry or a mixture type food prepared by several ingredients relished as a single item. Similarly acting as a mixture of several constituents, as mentioned above, is relished or experienced in its *rasa* form, the very phenomenological ontology of the theatrical performance. The audience tastes the *rasa* of the theatre—*vyañjana*. Practically, then, there is no theatre in the absence of the audience. *Rasa* and theatre (*nātya*) are, therefore, repeatedly identified by Abhinava – *tena rasa eva nātyam, nātyameva rasāḥ / rasasamudāyo hi nātyam*. The theatrical representation as a whole like a *vyañjana* manifests (*vyañj*) an emotion (*bhāva*) in its relishable form (*rasa*) for the perceptual experience (*āsvādana* = gustation) of the audience. The emotion manifested in the theatre is not an expression of an emotion of any individual (actor or playwright), who presses out his own inner mental states, but an emotion in general (*jāti*) is manifested in particular form (*vyakti*). Whereas in poetry this manifestation takes place by the specific revelatory function or potency of language called *vyañjanā*, in the theatre this manifestation takes place by the unification of several ingredients of acting. Therefore the theatrical performance is specially privileged for a better perceptualization of this manifestation than the verbal art of poetry. This is how Abhinavagupta concludes the Indian view of manifestation or revelation in poetry and drama that might provide a clue for appreciating the Western theory of expression in the verbal and theatrical arts avoiding the problems of subjectivity that has controversialized the concept in its current critical perspectives.

In fact some of the contemporary Western critics have converged on this view of expression as manifestation of generalities when they consider the artworks as "ambiguously self-expressive objects" in experiencing which the audience needs neither go behind nor beyond the work—searching for any inner or personal mental states of the artist, nor expect anything readily available on the surface of the artwork (Tate, 1971: 140-41). The appreciation of this manifestation requires the appropriate cultural background of the audience in apprehending the manifestation—his taste, choice and perceptual ability—what the Sanskrit critic calls *pratibhā* or *sahṛdayatā*. They would also agree with the Indian view that artworks are not appreciated as expression or externalization of anything inner by means of its expressivity or expressive signs serving as the indexical marks for a probandum (the inner/ the expressed beyond the expression) to be inferred. Art as a manifestation is a perceptual phenomenon in and for itself. The expression is the expressed, not an expression of something other than itself.

11
One Bright Pearl:
On Japanese Aesthetic Expressivity

Jason M. Wirth

> *One bright pearl* is able to express reality without naming it, and we can recognize this pearl as its name. One bright pearl communicates directly through all time.[1]
>
> *Dōgen Zenji*

Preface

All the universe is one bright pearl. This was the teaching of the late Tang Dynasty Chan Master Hsüan-sha Shih-pei (835-908), whom the Japanese call Master Gensa Shibi. It is a strange expression. What does it mean? What is there to understand?

The incomparable Dōgen Kigen (1200-1253) turned to this expression in a fascicle from his *Shōbōgenzō* (*Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*) called *Ikka Myōju* (*One Bright Pearl*, 1238). For Dōgen, this expression did not *mean* anything. It was not a discursively warranted claim about the nature of things. It did not offer a philosophical account. It was an expression not in the sense of a proposition or a premise, for the latter, while making a claim, did not *express* the Dharma. In fact, Dōgen eschewed propositional discourse about the Dharma, and warned his monks to be wary of the "briars and brambles of word-attachment" (HDS, 2), and not to "get caught up in skillfully turned words and phrases" (HDS, 17) and not be "enmeshed in the traps and snares of words and letters" (HDS, 18). Dharma transmission is not accomplished through the exchange of information about the Dharma. Rather, when the young Hsüan-sha,

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[1] *The Heart of Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō*, trans. Norman Waddell and Masao Abe, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002, 34. Henceforth HDS.

who had been a fisherman, floated down the Nan-t'ai River, like many other fisherman, "he did not even expect the Golden Fish that comes to you unbidden without angling for it" (HDS, 32). He did not expect the communicative expressivity of sudden—unbidden—Enlightenment.

How then is Dharma expressed and thereby communicated when *expression* is not *strictu sensu* fundamentally meaningful and *communication* is not the successful exchange of ideas? Communication is not even dialogue, with its dynamic and ongoing ebbs and flows and fusing horizons. It is not a question of holding or promoting the superior doctrine, for with authentic practice, humans "have flowed into the Way [*Dao*] drawn by grasses and flowers, mountains and running water. They have received the lasting impression of the Buddha-seal by holding soil, rocks, sand, and pebbles." Indeed, a "single mote of dust suffices to turn the great Dharma wheel" (HDS, 17).

This essay will attempt to speak to this question as a means of articulating the expressive dimension of some classical forms of Japanese art. Of course the richness diversity of the Japanese aesthetic tradition renders silly any attempt to speak definitively of Japanese art as if it were all one kind of thing. I will focus on some classic forms of art as *communicative expressivity* in the Soto and Rinzai Zen traditions (poetry, calligraphy, and the rock garden). Although Shinto and Confucianism also deeply inform the sensibility of and within this vast and complex tradition, for reasons of space we will leave them until another time.

We will take Dōgen as our guide. Of course there are many people who could have served this role, but, to avoid the impossible and deflationary task of reducing what is here to be thought to a wide-ranging laundry list, we will concentrate on some relevant aspects of his extraordinary writings, although we will also make reference to two of the preeminent thinkers of the Twentieth Century Kyoto School, namely Nishida Kitarō and Hisamatsu Shin'ichi. In order to further articulate the task at hand, namely communicative expressivity, we will also look at two complementary approaches from the West, namely Spinoza and Schelling.

In other words, we will attempt to articulate the expressive dimension in the successful examples of works from a Zen aesthetic sensibility by hearing them as communicating in the fashion of *one bright pearl*. In so doing, we will attempt to sharpen our sensibility to the expressive dimensions of the inexhaustible sky of emptiness (*śūnyatā* or what Dōgen and the Zen tradition calls *ku*). In the words of Dōgen (from the fascicle *Bendōwa*), this will be like hearing *śūnyatā* itself: "the sound that issues from the striking of emptiness is an endless and wondrous voice that resounds before and after the fall of the hammer" (HDS, 14).

I. One Bright Pearl

In the *Ikka Myōju* Dōgen tells us that after Master Gensa (Hsüan-sha) received the Dharma transmission and was enlightened, he developed his own pedagogy: he taught with the words "All the universe is one bright pearl" (HDS, 33).[2]

As is often the case in the Zen record, a hapless monk asks a naïve question. This time around, the monk asks Master Gensa: "I've heard you have said that all the universe is one bright pearl. How can I gain an understanding of that?"

Master Gensa, ever the teacher, responded, "All the universe is one bright pearl. What is there to understand?" (HDS, 33)

Prima facie Master Gensa's response appears like it can be heard in at least one of three ways. 1) The expression literally means what it says and there is nothing more to understand. 2) The expression does not mean what it says, but rather means something else. It must be interpreted and its true meaning must be found and, once found, the expression can be understood. 3) There is nothing whatsoever to understand about the expression and all language, all gestures, obscure the Dharma. Since it is all just words, that is, since all words are orphans, errantly roaming without a home in the Dharma, one word is just as good as any other word, and therefore, one can say anything whatsoever.

Any of these readings would fail to hear what is being expressed in Master Gensa's teaching. The next day, Master Gensa returned the question to the monk, "All the universe is one bright pearl. What is your understanding of it?" The monk speaks to the Master from the third option, asserting, "All the universe is one bright pearl. What need is there to understand?" (HDS, 33)

Whether one follows any of the three options, that is whether one takes Master Gensa literally at his word (memorizing by rote what one is supposed to know like a "good student"), or one offers an intellectual account of *śūnyatā*, or one thinks abstractly about the impossibility of understanding *śūnyatā*, and in so doing allowing it merely to negate anything that one would understand (there is no use to the understanding), one is "mounting the robber's horse to chase the robber" (HDS, 35). How can one mount the robber's horse if the robber has already run away on it? One would be getting ahead of oneself. As Dōgen says elsewhere, this would be like looking all over the place for one's own head. Or more precisely: the monk attempts to offer a possible expression of Dharma without *first* having Dharma. Master Gensa's expression emerges from Dharma, while the student holds onto the footprints of the Dharma without first having the walking of Dharma. As Shibayama Rōshi commented, "Training in Zen aims

[2] Literally, all of the universe in ten directions is one bright pearl.

at the direct experience of breaking through to concrete Reality. That breaking through to Reality has to be personally attained by oneself. Zen can never be an idea or knowledge, which are only shadows of Reality."[3]

Hence, Master Gensa tells the monk, "Now I know that you are living in the Cave of Demons on Black Mountain" (HDS, 33). This is not a good place to be. In Buddhist mythology, this is the place of stygian darkness, receiving absolutely no light (not even moonlight) and located at the edge of the universe. The monk is lost in the dark night when all Buddhas are black. There is no light in the monk's would be Enlightenment. It is false and delusional, a vacuous abstraction, a bad infinity, attached to fancy words and ideas like *śūnyatā* without operating from the platform or standpoint of *śūnyatā*. The monk is attached to the letter of the expressions themselves, without the living force of expressivity itself.

Master Gensa was not speaking *about* the Dharma but rather *from* the Dharma and hence Dōgen says that this is *expressing* the Dharma, not a statement telling us *what* the Dharma is. The word Dharma in itself, truncated from its source, heals nothing and expresses nothing. It is just a word. The bright pearl says the Dharma (HDS, 34). Dōgen uses the term *dōshu*, to say or utter the Dao, to transmit it through language, but not merely as language. It is to speak the language of Dao by translating Dao into human languages. "That stalk of grass, this tree, is not a stalk of grass, is not a tree; the mountains and rivers of this world are not the mountains and rivers of this world. They are the bright pearl" (HDS, 34).

The force of expression nonetheless remains obscure both in Asian and European traditions, and, seeking additional clarity, I now attempt to bring the former into relation with the latter.

II. Two Western Expressions of Expressivity

Although the Continental tradition of expressivity remains one of its underappreciated and poorly understood contributions, some of its proponents have nonetheless been quite eloquent and revelatory regarding the issue at hand. I turn briefly to two such accounts.[4]

[3] Shibayama Zenkei, *Zen Comments on the Mumonkan*, trans. Kudo Sumiko, New York: Harper and Row, 1974, 22.
[4] For a further development of this in relation to these two thinkers, especially Schelling, see my "Animalization: Schelling and the Problem of Expressivity" in *Schelling Now:*

Deleuze on Spinoza

In Gilles Deleuze's important reading of Spinoza, expressivity, or what Deleuze calls "expressionism," speaks to and from the infinite *folds* of being in their ceaseless *complication*. The latter is a technical term, and Deleuze emphasizes the *pli*, the fold, that operates throughout expression. The attributes in their individual modes im*pli*cate substance (the absolute subject, the indivisible infinity of God) and substance ex*pli*cates itself in attributive modalities. The *pli* is therefore simultaneously evolution (infinity's self expression) and an involution (the expressed involve more than themselves). Being is the *complicare* of *implicare* and *explicare*.[5] Borrowing Schelling's notation, one could say that A explicates (folds out) itself as A[1] and the A[1] folds in, implicating itself as an explication of A (=A[2]). A[1] and A[2], *explicare* and *implicare*, belong together as a *complicare* or A[3]:

> To explicate is to evolve, to involve is to implicate. Yet the two terms are not opposites: they simply mark two aspects of expression. Expression is on the one hand an explication, an unfolding of what expresses itself, the One manifesting itself in the Many (substance manifesting itself in its attributes, and these attributes manifesting themselves in their modes). Its multiple expression, on the other hand, involves Unity. The One remains involved in what expresses it, imprinted in what unfolds it, immanent in whatever manifests it; expression is in this respect an involvement. (EPS, 16)

Expressionism is not be confused with Neo-Platonic (Plotinian) theories of *emanation*. Plotinus, for example, reversed the direction of Platonic thought, which attempts to articulate the "participation" of the Many in the One. Beginning with the One, Plotinus argues that the One "emanates" as the myriad beings. Emanation and expressionism are the same only insofar as the One in both accounts gives itself without altogether losing its sovereignty amidst either its emanations or its expressions. "They produce while remaining in themselves" (EPS, 171). However, an emanative cause, in being otherwise than what it gives, therefore remains absolutely aloof from its gifts. This wholesale aloofness makes the One a grand transcendent object, a Good beyond the superfluity of its creaturely donations, having "nothing in common" with them (EPS, 172). Bereft of the One, the creaturely ceaselessly look *beyond* their inadequate selves and world

Contemporary Readings, ed. Jason M. Wirth, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005, 84-98.

[5] Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin, New York: Zone Books, 1990. Henceforth EPS.

and, as such, Plotinus, despite his immense subtlety and brilliance, cannot escape what Nietzsche called the ascetic ideal, the immense exhaustion and *ressentiment* before the gift of being; "the ascetic treats life as a wrong path that one must finally retrace back to the point where it begins."[6] Emanation is the downward ascent of the One and those below, impelled by the traces of the Good, seek their lost origin beyond the wayward adventure of creation. Plotinus: "There must then be The Good—Good unmixed—and the Mingled Good and Bad, and the Rather Bad than Good, this last ending with the Utterly Bad ..." (I.8.12)[7] The farther one travels from the Good, the less Good there is, and matter itself, the most base, the farthest removed from the origin, is "primal evil" (I.8.11). Those seduced by the traces of the origin within the emanations risk becoming immensely ungrateful in their relentless nostalgia for the Giver. Porphyry reports that Eustochius told him that Plotinus' last words were: "I have been a long time waiting for you; I am striving to give back the Divine in myself to the Divine in the All."

For Spinoza and Schelling, the One, while wholly otherwise than its expressions, nonetheless paradoxically conceals and expresses itself in its self-expressions. It self-predicates while withdrawing or, to put it in other words, it self-negates in the very act of self-predication or self-expression. Emanation holds the One above Being while Expressionism implicates it within the complication of Being. For Spinoza, God is an immanent, not a transitive cause (Ethics, I, proposition 18). The One does not hold the creaturely hostage. Immanence is not immanent to a grand object beyond it or a lost subject, which continually calls the adventure of being back home. As Deleuze says elsewhere: "Spinoza was the philosopher who knew full well that immanence was only immanent to itself and therefore that it was a plane traversed by movements of the infinite, filled with intensive coordinates. He is therefore the prince of philosophers."[8] In a footnote, Deleuze also credits this insight to Dōgen, who also articulated the

[6] Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality* (1887), trans. Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1998, 83 (third treatise, section 11).

[7] This is therefore the *privatio* theory of evil, evil increasing with its distance from the original Good (the greater the distance, the greater the lack). I use the stand notation and the Stephen MacKenna translation of the *Enneads*, two volumes, Boston, MA: Charles T. Branford Company, 1916.

[8] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, 48. Henceforth WIP.

plane of immanence, otherwise than the ascetic demands of emanation, as the horizon or "reserve" of events (WIP, 220).

In this sense, *one bright pearl* may not be a fundamentally meaningful expression, but it is a properly complicated one.

Schelling

Deleuze also acknowledged Schelling's proximity to Spinoza. To be sure, Spinoza and his retrieval of the immanence of nature greatly influenced Schelling, who attempted to translate Spinoza into a language that saved him from the dogmatism of a "one-sided realism," that is, from any danger of having adequately thought substance as a thing in itself (as a substantial origin). Nonetheless, Schelling's own embrace of a discourse of expressivity that one finds in his tremulous 1809 essay on *Human Freedom* has its provenance more in the works of Jakob Böhme rather than Spinoza, yet in practice "Schelling is a Spinozist when he develops a theory of the absolute, representing God by the symbol 'A³' which comprises the Real and the Ideal as its powers" (EPS, 118). Schelling attempted to articulate the negative and positive dimensions of nature's prodigal expressivity.

Schelling argued that only the human, who typically dwells below all other animals, can rise to the power of an articulation of the *word of nature*, saying simultaneously in an expression the expressed and the inexpressible. Such a word expresses the spirit of nature, both Spinoza's *natura naturata*, that is, nature as it has come to be, and *natura naturans*, nature as it is coming to be, but is in itself not a being. "For the eternal spirit expresses [*spricht aus*] the unity or the Word in nature. But the expressed (real) Word is simply the unity of light and darkness (vowel and consonant)" (I/7, 364).[9] Light says itself and is, as such, a vowel, *ein Selbstlaut*. That is to say, the vowel of nature is literally what can be said simply by reference to *what it is*. When, however, the light refers only to itself or its own domain, when the word only expresses words, then the invisible and the inexpressible are not given with expression. The domains of the spoken and the visible refer only to their own orders.

The speaking of the word, however, is to speak in such a way that the vowel allows the silence of the consonant (the *Mitlaut*, that which cannot be said by itself), to be said with what can be said by itself (the vowel). Or as the tradition of the Buddha Dharma has it: the moon (enlightenment) casts no light of its own and hence needs the light of another (the sun) for the moon to appear, to emerge in the realm of light (the realm of vowel). Without the vowel of the sun, the consonant of the moon, which cannot say itself by itself, remains unsaid and unseen. Yet when the sun gives the moon to be seen, the moon nonetheless remains in itself dark and silent.

Humans can break the unity of the Word and thereby exclusively speak their own words and flee to the periphery of language and dwell in the perverse house of vowels (vowels expressed for the sake of vowels and not for the sake of consonants). Expressivity intrudes in to the monologue of the vowel in actions like art, which emerge in their immanent creativity from the consonants of nature. *Art is the human speaking the language of nature* and its language can sober philosophy from its obsessions with transcendence or the banality of its own monological self-obsession. As Schelling concluded his *System of Transcendental Idealism*: "Nature, to the artist, is nothing more than it is to the philosopher, being simply the ideal world appearing under permanent restrictions, or merely the imperfect reflection of a world existing, not outside him, but within." Hence, philosophy shall flow back "like so many individual streams into the universal ocean of poetry from which they took their source."[10]

The tyranny of the vowel, where all depth is transcendent and hence an argument against our life on the surface, and, in the twilight of such transcendence, where all life is banal and consigned to the hell of being stuck with itself (the Death of God as the default rise of anthropocentrism), is a modern version of what the Buddha in the First Noble Truth called the life of *dukkha*, of turmoil and suffering. Expressivity belongs to the standpoint otherwise than this tyranny. It is in this spirit that we now return to Dōgen.

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[9] For my brief discussion of Schelling, I am using the standard pagination, which follows the original edition established after Schelling's death by his son, Karl. It is preserved in Manfred Schröter's critical reorganization of this material. *Schellings Sämtliche Werke*, Stuttgart-Augsburg: J. G. Cotta, 1856-1861; *Schellings Werke: Nach der Originalausgabe in neuer Anordnung*, ed. Manfred Schröter , Munich: C. H. Beck, 1927. Translations are my own.

[10] Friedrich Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), trans. Peter Heath, Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1978, 232.

III. Dōgen and Dōtoku

Dōgen writes that "*One bright pearl* is able to express reality without naming it," and the later phrase, to express reality without naming it, is Waddell and Abe's admirable and creative effort to handle the elusive and critical term *dōtoku*. Above, in our discussion of *dōshu*, actually speaking Dao, giving its fathomless silence voice, we saw that in a sense, this phrases actually expresses Dao, albeit, like all expression, in a singular way. To mimic what Master Gensa actually says, without actually speaking from the standpoint of Dao, is to live in the Cave of Demons on Black Mountain. In a sense, *dōshu*, the application of expressivity, is therefore an actual instance of *dōtoku*, that is, expressivity as such, the ability or power to express Dao without naming it. As we shall see, from expressivity, from this more fundamental ability, comes the ability to create, that is, from this site originates the power of *poiēsis*.

As in *dōshu*, the first of the two kanji that comprises *dōtoku* is *dō*, which is the Japanese reading of the Chinese character for Dao – 道, the great pivot at the heart of the "ten thousand," the "myriad beings," that is to say, the absolute nothingness that actively expresses itself as all beings. *Dō* also has a secondary valence, namely, to say or to express, with or without words. *Toku* – 得, on the other hand, is to be able or capable of doing something as well as to attain or grasp something. It is quite literally the ability to speak, which we can in this respect interpret as the attainment of expressivity, which is even more fundamentally the attainment or grasp of Dao, but even more complexly, it is the ability to express Dao, to say the unsayable, to translate the soundless sound and the formless form into human discourse and works, that is, to be able to express Dao without naming it, without snaring it in words, or creative works. It is to activate nothingness expressively. Gudo Nishijima and Chodo Cross translate it as "expressing the truth," "saying what one has got," or "speaking attainment." The monk, who floundered in Master Gensa's *mondo*, said what he had, which amounted to nothing, but not absolute nothingness, just the nothingness of an empty set. In merely repeating Master Gensa, and taking refuge in abstract non-sense, in the night when all Buddhas are black, he expressed his confusion and non-grasp of Dao. He uttered the words *all the universe is one bright pearl*, but he said nothing, rather than activating the explosive generosity of absolute noth-ingness. As Hee-Jin Kim articulates it: "Thus, only in the nondualistic context of 'the inaudible in speech' and 'the hearing-immediately in no-speech' is speech in the conventional sense liberated, authenticated, and reinstated for use in the enterprise of ongoing enlightenment."[11] If one uses words to merely communi-cate ideas, or recite them from memory, or even to hide in (Hegel's) bad infinity, "you are no different," Dōgen says in *Bendōwa*, "from a frog in a spring field-although you croak from morning until nightfall, it will bring you no benefit at all" (HDS, 15).

Dōtoku for Dōgen, as Masao Abe argues, expresses Dao naturally, that is to say, *dōtoku* is naturalness (*jinen*). "By 'natural' he suggests that the natural mani-festation of "expressing the Way" (*dōtoku*) in and of itself transcends the capac-ity of our body and mind." Since it is, as Dōgen writes, nothing "unusual or mysterious," Abe concludes that *dōtoku* "occurs 'in and of itself,' that is, 'natu-rally.'"[12] The floundering monk spoke unnaturally, and his words were kitsch, not art. The latter, when "true," is always natural.

In 1242 Dōgen wrote a fascicle for the *Shōbōgenzō* called *Dōtoku* and it treats these issues explicitly. He began by proclaiming that "the buddhas and the patriarchs are *dōtoku*" and when the "the Buddhist patriarchs are deciding who is a Buddhist patriarch" they always ask whether or not they are *dōtoku*. "They ask this question with the mind, they ask with the body, they ask with a staff and whisk, and they ask with outdoor pillars and stone lanterns" (MDS, 229). They ask with everything they have and everything they are. They inquire from the depths of their being. Dharma transmission, that is to say, communicative ex-pressivity, is from enlightened mind to enlightened mind, Buddha to Buddha. It is always *yuibutsu yobutsu*, "only Buddha and Buddha."

Indeed, all *dōtoku*, whether it is a present expression, or an expression of an ancient master, are "a single track and they are ten thousand miles apart." They are not just temporally apart (contemporary versus ancient), they are utterly apart. They cannot be unified under the Same, they are not members of a set, individual instantiations of something more universal, yet, in their absolute dif-ference from each other,[13] they are a single track. They express the absolute dif-ference of the Dao itself, and hence each is singular, yet each mirrors Dao. As we saw above: "One bright pearl communicates directly through all time."[14]

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[11] Hee-Jin Kim, *Dōgen Kigen: Mystical Realist*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1987, 84.

[12] Masao Abe, *A Study of Dōgen: His Philosophy and Religion*, ed. Steven Heine, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992, 159.

[13] They are, in Kierkegaard's terms, singularities that stand higher than the universal (*Fear and Trembling*, Problema One).

[14] This brings us to one of Dōgen's most profound and difficult teachings: *uji*. U is being and *ji* is time, and "time, just as it is, is being, and being is all time (HDS, 48). Being ex-

Dōgen then turns to the great Chan Master Joshu:

> If you spend a lifetime not leaving the monastery, sitting in stillness without speaking for ten years or for five years, nobody will be able to call you a mute. Afterwards you might be beyond even the buddhas. (MDS, 231)

Sitting without speech, the cultivation of expressive silence does not make you a mute. This silence communicates expressively. "Do not hate *not speaking*" for it is *dōtoku* "being right from head to tail" (MDS, 231). Furthermore, *a lifetime not leaving the monastery* "is a lifetime without leaving" *dōtoku*. Even if one were actually a mute, and could never actually say any words, this would not preclude *dōtoku*. "Do not learn that mutes must lack" *dōtoku*. Some hapless monks recite sutras all day long but say nothing. Others cannot speak, but in their *dōtoku* say everything. "Their mute voices can be heard" (MDS, 232). To hear this one is *ichibutsu-nibutsu*: one Buddha (together in communicative expressivity) yet two Buddhas (uniquely expressive, radically singular in one's expressive action). The track by which two communicants are one Buddha ("only Buddha and Buddha") expresses itself as being ten thousand miles apart, that is to say, utterly apart, that is to say, two Buddhas.

Once can see Dōgen's own unique artistic personality, the fruit of his underlying *dōtoku*, in his waka (31 syllable) poetry. I turn first to a poetic expression of the poetic word itself:

Furyū monji	No reliance on words and letters
Ii suteshi	Not limited
Sono koto no ha no	By language,
Hoka nareba	It is ceaselessly expressed;
Fude ni mo ato o	So, too, the way of letters
Todome zari keri	Can display but not exhaust it.[15]

presses time and time is the vertical dimension of the horizon of being. Does not merely "fly by," that is to say, it does not merely pass, for that would imply that beings are themselves transpiring in and through time. Rather beings are time and time expresses itself as the multitudinous plenitude of being. "Mountains are time, and seas are time. If they were not time, there would be no mountains and seas" (HDS, 56). If mountains and seas were in time, then a mountain would simply *be* a mountain. Rather, *uji* is *keireki* and *kyōraku*, what Waddell and Abe call a "seriatim passage," a discontinuous sequence of what Dōgen calls "Dharma stages" (HDS, 51).

[15] Steven Heine, *The Zen Poetry of Dōgen*, North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle, 1997, 66. Henceforth ZPD.

I am not taking, following Steven Heine, the opening line (*ii suteshi*) literally, which would read it as a renunciation of speech (ZPD, 66), as if, shorn of language, we could some how extra-linguistically and "mystically" access and communicate the Dharma. To be sure, language is inadequate and discursivity cannot penetrate the Dharma. We must be ever vigilant of the "briar and bramble of word attachment," but if one reads this as the naïve rejection of language, including written and spoken language, but also all artistic language (ink paintings, tea bowls, calligraphy, rock gardens), then the entire Japanese Mahāyāna tradition, would become a performative contradiction. Indeed, *fude* ("the way of letters") is associated with both sutras (indicating that they are expressive, not discursive or descriptive) and calligraphy, which, as we will see below, understands the content of its literal meaning as more fundamentally expressive of the style of its presentation. Calligraphy is more than what it says. It is the expression of Zen mind. The irony would be painful and the poem would be at best trivial and worst ludicrous: how can this poem speak at all, let alone well, if it is a mere renunciation of speech?

The unexpressed subject (the "it") is the Dharma, which, as we have already seen in our analysis of *dōtoku*, expresses itself throughout the entire plenitude of being ("all the universe"). The Dharma is "ceaselessly expressed," but when language is reduced to the exchange of information, the positing and defending of propositions, communication *ichibutsu-nibutsu*, one Buddha and two buddhas, is not possible. One must attain the standpoint of *dōtoku*, from where all nature is ceaselessly expressing Dharma and from where one seeks to use language broadly construed, language in, using Heine's felicitous phrase, "the special *yojō* of mysterious depths overflowing words" (ZPD, 66-67). Expressive language, therefore, is always more than what it says, and its modes of saying run the range from sutras, *teishō* (commentaries on sutras by which a Master expresses her or his Zen mind), poetry, calligraphy, painting, flower arranging, serving tea, molding clay (tea cups and other tea utensils), building and viewing rock gardens, etc.

Dōgen also turned directly to nature itself:

> Every morning, the sun rises in the east;
> Every night, the moon sets in the west;
> Clouds gathering over the foggy peaks;
> Rain passes through the surrounding hills and plains. (ZPD, 55)

Here the preeminence of the autobiographical standpoint (what is nature to me?) is starkly absent. Rather suchness (*tathāthāta*), things just as they are, im-

permanent, expressive of the depths of time, dependently co-originating (pratītyasamutpāda, what Dōgen and his tradition call *engi*) expresses itself naturally, as if language itself became more natural, more true to nature itself.

These themes would return with great philosophical vigor in the Twentieth Century with Nishida Kitarō and the Kyoto School. Although the complexity of Nishida and those who thought within his general climate of ideas are too complex to discuss adequately in this essay, I would like to mention in passing the fashion in which Nishida articulates the problem of expressivity. Nishida's term is *hyōgen*. *Hyō* literally means to rise to the surface, and *gen* means something like to arise or (ontologically) appear. Expression is the self-predication, the coming to the surface, of a subject that is absolutely nothing, that in itself cannot appear and therefore that which self-negates in order to appear. (In this sense, one might speak of a non-subject in the subject position.) Art, inter alia, is a site (*basho*) for *hyōgen*. "In art, expression itself is truth."[16] This is not to say that artistic activity, expressive communication, is the same thing as *hyōgen*, but rather, just as *dōshu* originates in *dōtoku*, artistic creativity originates in *hyōgen*. Nishida was quite clear about this in *Fundamental Problems of Philosophy*:

> Therefore, it is not that expressive activity should be derived from artistic creativity, but rather that artistic creativity should arise from the fact that actions are essentially expressive. Art must be the revelation of life. But the artistic should be thought to exist at the point where individual and universal become one in the determination of place [*basho*].[17]

Basho the place or site that expresses the absolute nothingness (*zettai mu*) in the "self-identity of absolute contradiction. Expression is self-predication through self-negation. Artistic creativity derives from the self-determining place [*basho*]. This site expresses individuality, but by this Nishida does not mean an objective individual, an individual entity among individual entities. He means singularity ("one Buddha"): "We can objectively find true individuality in such a thing as aesthetic creation. The self which is an object of thought is not the true self. The artist himself does not know what his creation will be. In such an instance he sees through action" (FPP, 69). The acting self, the expressive site of artistic singularity, that is to say, that which continues to discover itself, to see itself and

its world through action, is born "from the depths of the eternal" (FPP, 69), from "an infinite depth" (FPP, 81). It mirrors this depth obliquely, individually, like Leibniz's infinite monads with their own windowless, opaque depths mirror the infinite each in their own way, each expressing the infinite in their actions.

IV. Calligraphy and Rock Gardens

In conclusion, we turn to two brief discussions of artistic expressivity, namely Zen calligraphy and the rock garden.

Zen Calligraphy

Zen calligraphy is a free expression of *Mushin*, that is, of the empty, Zen mind,[18] or what Nishida's student, Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, called the "Formless Self,"[19] as it expresses *Zenki*, that is, Zen activity or Zen force.[20] It is the active or vital expression of the Zen mind, although this is not to say that this activity is the energy (*ki*) of a self-possessed agent. Zen activity does not express ego-originating agency. *Mushin*, rather, is the active self-predication of absolutely *nothing*, which therefore does not chiefly express a conscious, goal oriented striving on the part of the calligrapher-agent, but rather the coming to expression of one's "original face." The Formless Self is empty, that is to say, it does not posses being of its own, although it expresses itself with greater energy than any "thing" could. It is the "utterance before voice" and "prior to the separation of heaven and earth" (ZFA, 12-13).

Zen calligraphy, therefore, is not merely calligraphy by Zen practitioners, nor is it simply calligraphy with Zen content (phrases from the Zen record, Bodhidharma depictions, etc.). The ink is alive, rife with Dharma energy. It is the

[16] Nishida Kitarō, *Art and Morality* (1923), trans. David A. Dilworth and Valdo H. Vigliclmo, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1973, 99.

[17] Nishida Kitarō, *Fundamental Problems of Philosophy* (1933), trans. David A. Dilworth, Tokyo: Sophia University, 1970, 160. Henceforth FPP.

[18] The term derives from Master Joshu. When asked by a monk if a dog had Buddha Nature, Joshu replied *Mu*! This is the Japanese reading of the kanji for *No*, but this *No* is not a negation, not a relegation of the dog's Buddha Nature to an empty set. (The Buddha Dharma teaches that all beings have Buddha nature.) It is a *No* beyond "Yes and No," that is, it is an expression of Buddha nature, not a discursive account of it. *Shin* is the kanji read as *kokoro*, the heart-mind's expression of *Mu*. Zen Mind is more than even the most accomplished cerebral activity. It is every aspect of consciousness expressing *Mu*.

[19] Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, *Zen and the Fine Arts*, trans. Tokiwa Gishin, Tokyo: Kodansha, 1971, 88. Henceforth ZFA.

[20] According to Hisamatsu, *Zenki* also connotes "wellspring, movement, dynamism, impulse, thrust, spontaneity, immediacy" (ZFA, 11).

surging forth of the *one bright pearl* into ink as, in Nishida's words, "the artist thinks through his technique" (AM, 103). "The artist does not think idly without taking up his brush. Only when he takes up his brush and faces the canvas does it become clear how he should paint, and an infinite direction opens up before him" (AM, 104). The brush becomes the manner in and through which the artist thinks, and thinking itself becomes expressive, much in the vein that Paul Klee spoke of his work as "musing with a line."

We can see this in the calligraphy here by Fukushima Keidō Rōshi, the head abbot at Tōfuku-ji Monastery, one of the five Big Mountain or Gozan Monasteries in Kyoto. The piece inscribes Chan Master Yun-men's (Japanese: Ummon, d. 949) expression: *Every day is a good day*. In Fukushima's calligraphic expression, one can see the flowing of naturalness, which, according to Hisamatsu, "results when the artist enters so thoroughly into what he is creating that no conscious effort, no distance between the two remains" (ZFA, 32). As Fukushima says of his own work:

> In a Zen art expression, the total person comes into form, and that has very much to do with Zen training and practice. And if that does not happen, it is not going to be Zen art. In all elements of Zen life, including Zen artistic expression, the full embodiment comes out. Another way of putting it is that it is question of being something fully. It is a question of *samādhi*[21] or concentration and *Mushin*, to be totally whatever it is that one is doing at the time, so that the work comes from this.[22]

In the calligraphy, the character for day (*nichi*) appears three times (the first character, the repeat sign, and the final, dancing, transformed character), and each time it is good and each time it is good in a different way. Every day is a *good* day, not the *same* day, and not good in the same way. A good day is the joy of difference. As such, one can see part of what Hisamatsu meant when he said that "That which is written is that which writes" (ZFA, 69). The ink expresses the *one bright pearl*. The *good day* vitalizes the ink.

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[21] *Samādhi* is the Sanskrit term for concentration or the settling of the mind so that there is total concentration on a single object, thereby overcoming the stubborn bifurcation between the subject who meditates and the object of meditation.

[22] This is from an interview I conducted with Fukushima Rōshi, which appears in *Zen no Sho: The Calligraphy of Fukushima Keidō Rōshi*, ed. Jason M. Wirth, Clear Light Books, 2003, 91-92.
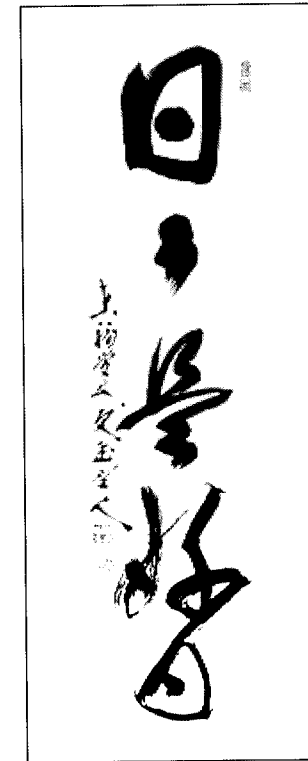
A Rock Garden (Ryōanji)

François Berthier in his eloquent essay, *Reading Zen in the Rocks*,[23] contemplates several of Kyoto's striking, screamingly silent stone gardens, with their carefully arranged, somewhat jagged stones, often with outcroppings of moss, in beds of raked pebbles. Turning to Ryōanji, founded in 1450, and perhaps Kyoto's—and the world's—most admired such garden, he reflects:

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[23] François Berthier, *Reading Zen in the Rocks: The Japanese Dry Landscape Garden*, trans. Graham Parkes, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. Henceforth RZR.

Rather than interrogating in vain the fifteen rocks of Ryōanji, it is better after a long contemplation, to lend an ear in order to catch their voices, which have been stifled by so many days and nights, and so much talk and noise. What are they saying, exactly? What silent words does this garden contain? (RZR, 41)

At this point Berthier lets the silence of the rocks speak:

I am nothing but blocks of stone on pieces of gravel. I am nothing but weight and silence, inertia and density. Nothing will ever learn my secret, or even whether I contain one. The only thing that can penetrate me is the silent cry of the cicada that pierces the heart of summer. Be content to taste the raw beauty of my opaque flesh; look at me without saying a word and ask me nothing; be silent and try, through my hermetic body, to find yourself. (RZR, 41)

Berthier's reference to cicadas is an allusion to a famous haiku by the incomparable Bashō (1644-1694):

Prevailing silence –
And penetrating the rock
The cicada's cry. (RZR, 148)

In their silence, inaudible to the atomistic self, the rocks cry out, and their song is the song of all beings. Nishida's student Hisamatsu Shin'ichi preferred not to call Ryōanji a *seki-tei* or "stone garden" as is customary but rather a *kū-tei* or "empty garden," an arrangement of and from emptiness (sunyata), referring to the "depth of the garden, the depth of the Fundamental Subject that is Nothing, of the Formless Self." The sublime austerity of the garden becomes possible because of its sparseness, for "too many stones, or too much variation, would absorb all of our attention and render it difficult for us to sense Nothingness or Emptiness."

Each rock expresses the cicada's cry: *all the universe is one bright pearl*.
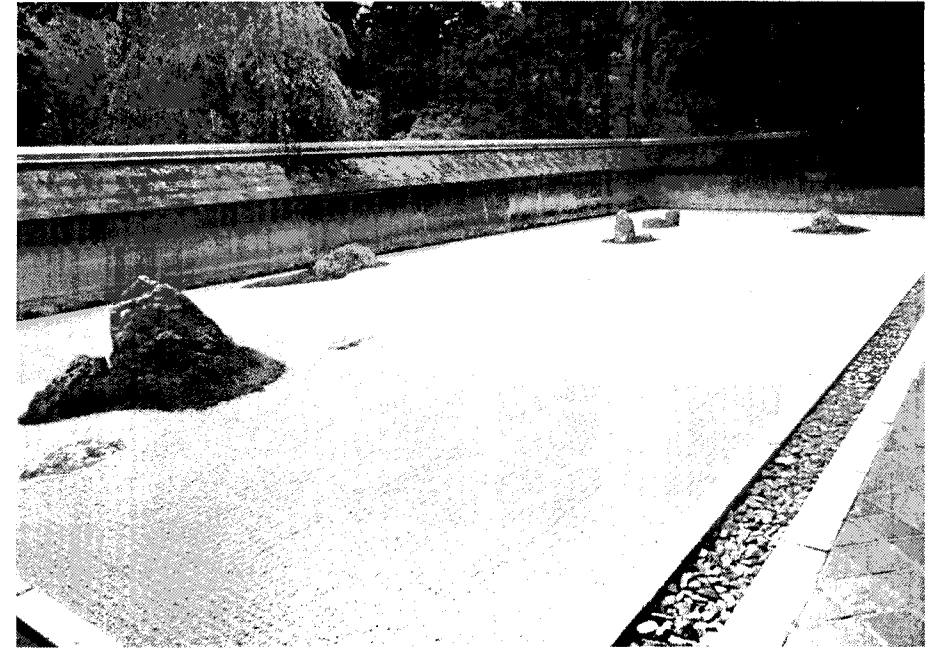
12
Water and Stone
On the Role of Expression in Chinese Art

Mary Bittner Wiseman

> Chinese art emphasizes "expression," while western art pays more attention to "reproduction." So, Chinese art stresses the creator's perception, understanding and feelings of life ...[1]

While emptiness, for example, is a value important in Chinese aesthetics but virtually absent from its Western counterpart, expression is a value important in both. However, what is expressed in each is radically different, so different that when we explore its place in Chinese art, we get a privileged glance both into a tradition older and unlike any in the West and into a culture emerging from the rapid and far-reaching changes that have been occurring in China over the past several decades. The changes raise questions about what in the new China is irreducibly Chinese, questions tied to those raised by the phenomenon of globalization: what is local in any culture, what in it resists becoming global, what is irreducibly of that culture? The changes suggest that the way to track the Chinese concept of expression is not so much to compare its functions in classical Chinese and Western art as to mark the difference between local and global in contemporary Chinese art. I examine art rather than literature because Western audiences are apt to be more familiar with the art of China than with its literature and because the high-voltage energy fueling the contemporary art scene in China is being expended in the creation of works of visual art.

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[1] Shuyang Su, *A Reader on China: An Introduction to China's history, culture, and civilization*, Shanghai: Shanghai Press and Publishing Company, 2005, 196.

Only within a familiar conceptual framework can one begin any inquiry, so for two reasons I begin this one by using the concept of expression as a switch point between Western and Chinese aesthetics. One reason is that the concept does have a role in both. Another is that rather than comparing expression in Chinese art with its counterpart in the West, I can move from the opposition *between* the arts of China and the West to the opposition between the local and the global, which exists *within* the art of each culture.

The artworld in China from the time of the nation's invitation in 1979 to foreign investments and ideas up to the present has been changing so fast that no style has had a chance to take root or take hold of artists' imaginations. Limited by no genres or styles, the artists are open to influence from what other artists are doing throughout the wired world—which soon will be the whole world—and from the international exhibitions to which Chinese artists are increasingly being invited. Moreover, avant-garde artists in China are wielding ever more influence worldwide as the number of exhibitions of contemporary Chinese art grows. This is why and how the art of a culture can reach out to the arts of other cultures. China's historical situation, in particular, the current exponential growth of capitalism there, makes the work of its artists more nearly global than that of other countries and suggests that the distinctiveness of current Chinese art should be sought in the relation between the local and the global rather than in the one between China and the West.

The global is not the international. The international extends across or beyond national boundaries, whereas the global is indifferent to them, and in its indifference minimizes their importance. It works not to establish relations between nations, but to transcend nations. The national origin of an influencing art matters no more than does the culture to which the art is native because artists will be influenced only by what they are ready for—by what engages them by communicating to and eliciting a response from them—whatever its source. This exemplifies a principle espoused by the chef Julia Child: something can properly receive only what is already in it. Before the cook folds beaten egg whites into the custard for a souffle, he must stir several spoonfuls of the beaten whites into the custard so that it will accept the full complement of egg whites and the whole will rise so high as to do the cook proud. Similarly, an artist can adopt from the art of another culture only what resonates with something already in her, and insofar as it does, it is no longer "other." She has made it her own.

Allowing that "local" and "global" describe a gamut along which artworks are one or the other in varying degrees and that there might be none that are wholly one or the other, I will even so characterize ta perfect example of each kind. With this caveat in mind, interpret "local" to refer to art so marked by its

place as not to be able to shake off the marks. In other words, people in other cultures cannot create such art, and audiences can hardly understand or connect with it.[2] Because such art resists its viewers, it strikes them as "other." "Global," then, refers to art that *can* travel and that non-native viewers can respond to easily enough to be able to appreciate it. Global artworks need not be free of *all* traces of their origin, however. It is necessary only that its viewers do not have to be conversant with the culture whose ethos the works express in order to be able to appreciate and engage them.

Among the artworks of both China and the West, some are local and some global. For this reason the difference between local and global trumps the difference between China and the West. Global arts are accessible to viewers other than those native to the country that spawned them. Local arts are not. Were the country of origin more important to a work's identity than its accessibility is to its value, the map of the artworld would be so configured as to identify countries by those artworks one of whose defining characteristics is their origin in that country. These, by hypothesis, are works that can be grasped only by someone whom birth or choice immersed in the artwork's country of origin. Since no outsiders could enter the country's art-world, isolationism or a kind of solipsism would reign, and the global arts that happen to have originated there would be in exile, absent from this map. But that is not how it is. China's artworld includes both the relatively local Peking Opera, for example, and the global works of its avant-garde.

Can we still ask whether there is anything irreducibly Chinese in the work of contemporary artists? The question is driven by the suspicion that since Chinese art has a stronger global thrust than many other arts, it is not especially "Chinese." This need not be so, however. The global appeal of contemporary Chinese art could as well rest on China and its culture's becoming more familiar to the rest of the world thanks to the worldwide web and the growing ease of travel. The weakest sense is which a work can be Chinese is when it is created in China by a native artist but has no characteristics we would identify as especially "Chinese." The strongest sense is when the work is "so Chinese" as to be accessible only to a native or near native. Most works fall between these extremes.

The point important for us is that the quest for the Chinese concept of expression is not undercut by the global influences at work and the international audiences attracted by contemporary work.

Appreciation of the role expression plays in classical Chinese art gives us a lens through which to look at contemporary work. This is a welcome help because the practice, criticism, and theory of art in post-Mao China is not easy to fit into the history of art in China up to and including art made in the spirit of Mao's 1942 "Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art." It is not easy because artists—especially those born during or after the Cultural Revolution of 1966 to 1976—are making art that asks what art is and what they as Chinese men and women are in a world in which the protagonists of the Cold War, communism and capitalism, coexist on their doorstep and in which China assumes an increasingly large role in the play of the world.

The art historian Norman Bryson observed that given this tension, the quest for a Chinese identity has to go on below the level of the disparate discourses of either of these systems, political and economic, that is to say, at the level of the body and its gestures. (1998: 57) We shall see that the "rhythmic vitality" of the Chinese classical painter is the effect of the work of the brush, the ink, and the wrist, not of a decision that can be articulated, no matter how rich the critical discourse. It will turn out that the new art is the expression of a robust materialism, a replay of the robust regard in which the natural world, the earth and its heavens, its water and stone, was held by the classical painters and poets. This respectful materialism is the legacy of the heirs of China's classical tradition, despite its politicization in the hands of Mao.

In what follows I look for the role played by expression in Chinese art by examining four texts dating from Hsieh Ho's fifth century "Six Principles of Chinese Painting" to "The Real Thing: Contemporary Art from China," an exhibition at Tate Liverpool that closed on June 10, 2007. The other two texts are Shih-t'ao's seventeenth century "An Expressionist Credo" and David Clarke's "The Watery Turn in Contemporary Chinese Art" in *Art Journal* (Winter 2006). I go to the fifth and seventeenth century Chinese texts, albeit to English translations of them, rather than to a history of Chinese aesthetics, to try as far as possible to enter the spirit of their times and to minimize my Westernization of their ideas.

The enterprise promises three rewards. First, the discovery of the Chinese conception of expression in art can teach us about traditional and current Chinese views of what art is and what it does, while the application of the discovered concept to our own art can enrich our appreciation and understanding of that art. Moreover, so far as the concept captures something essential to the art of

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[2] Stephen Davies has argued for aesthetic universals on the ground that our common human nature gives us access, albeit at times quite limited, to the arts of other cultures. His point can be accommodated by callings that arts that are easy of access to anyone "global," and those that are not, "local," allowing that there are degrees of each. His point is that little there is that is so local as to refuse access to any but natives of its place of origin.

China, it can trace a line from the classical tradition, through the exposure to Western modernization in the first half of the twentieth century and the restriction to celebrating communist ideology from the 1940s, to freedom from that restriction and the exposure to post-modernism after 1979.

Second, on the assumption that not everything in the Chinese concept is applicable to Western art, the discovery of what it is in our art that resists the concept's full application will begin to unearth fault lines between the arts of the two cultures.

Third, through our engagement with the work of Chinese artists to which we have access through the global art world, we test our capacity to make our own what comes from a different culture and art's capacity to transcend the ethos of the place of its birth. In short, we test our ability to assimilate what erstwhile had been "the other" and that of art to become expatriate. This sense of the difference between what we can readily respond to and what strikes us as "other" heightens our sense of what is distinctive in Chinese art.

Expression

It is appropriate at the outset to say something about the concept of expression, even though this is not the place to spell out or defend a theory of expression in art. I assume the meaning of "expression" to be more or less the same in Chinese and Western aesthetics. I assume further the primary difference between its appearance in the arts of the two cultures to lie in the nature of what is expressed and the importance of its expression in art to the culture. Two Western accounts of expression—the high analytic one of Monroe Beardsley and the more catholic one of Rudolf Arnheim—will provide a conceptual map on which to locate theories adumbrated or presupposed by the four texts to be examined. (Beardsley, 1981; Arnheim, 1974)

Few would deny that expression is a relation, whose minimal formulation, and I here follow Beardsley, is "an artwork expresses a psychological state or quality."[3] Limiting what is expressed to mental attitudes or activities implies agency, which inclines us to rewrite the formula as "someone expresses a psychological state through an work of art." Beardsley objects that on two natural readings of this, it either requires too much to verify it or tells us too little. If it means that the artist felt, say, joy when she made her work, then to determine its

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[3] Beardsley's arguments are directed against the expression theory of meaning in music, but they apply to visual art as well because it too is non-discursive.

truth we would have either to know what the artist was feeling while she was working or to generalize from known examples that when artists makes works like this, they usually feel thus and so. We rarely have independent evidence about an artist's state of mind, so that strategy does not work. Nor does the generalization, because no artwork is just like any other. Each is unique. If, on the other hand, "the artist expresses joy through a given work" means that she was causally responsible for the existence of the work, it tells us nothing beyond the fact that the artist made it. Yet this objection to a common reading of "a work of art expresses thus and so" does not touch expression in traditional Chinese art, where the desired relation among artist, artwork, and what the work expresses is a harmony or oneness foreign to Western thought.

Beardsley continues with a second reading in which the formula is taken to mean that when a viewer says of a work that it expresses joy, she means that she feels joy when she looks at it. But she can as well have said that the work *arouses* joy in her. "Express" is redundant, as it is in a third reading, in which joy is not what either artist or viewer feels in their engagements with the art object but is what resides in the object itself. But we can then say that the work *is* joyous and do not need "express." I am reminded of Harvard professor Donald Williams' counter to Wittgenstein's claim that if something *is* a duck you cannot say it is *like* a duck. William's said "what's more like a duck than a duck?" In this vein, he would say to Beardsley "What better *expresses* joy than something that *is* joyful?"

A final complication of Beardsley's bare bones "an artwork expresses a psychological state or quality" is the inclusion of the way in which expression is achieved in an artwork. In such a case "something is expressed by someone *in some way* through some medium or other." How the artist's brush and wrist are held in classical Chinese painting determines the quality of the stroke, and in Chinese ink painting and its cousin, calligraphy, the stroke is what is expressive. The lines of dripped paint in Jackson Pollack's drip paintings are also expressive, and the distinctive way in which they were made is one of the causes of the paintings' power. So it is with Titian's layers of transparent glazes, Seurat's dots, Van Gogh's short, thick paint strokes, Picasso's pasted-on pieces of newspaper and other odds and ends; they all contribute to the expressive power of the paintings they compose. How or why does *the way* the paintings are made contribute to their power? It has to do as much with the artist's body, with the movements made by his fingers, hand, wrist, arm, as with his feelings or intentions.

In his book *Art and Visual Perception*, Arnheim says in discussing the dynamic qualities of what we see that part of the reason nature is alive to our eyes is that "its shapes are fossils of the events that gave rise to them." (1974: 417)

We can extend this to artworks and say that they too are alive to our eyes when they display the history of the painters' movements that gave rise to them. But—and here is where Arnheim makes his singular contribution—we do not infer the past history of a work of nature or art from clues, but directly experience it "as forces and tensions present and active" in the objects' visible shapes. (417) It is not because we can imagine Pollack making the paint dance as he pours it onto canvases lying on his studio's floor that his drip paintings are perceived as interplays of tension-heightening and tension-reducing forces, but because the forces are "present and active" in the paintings themselves. (411) Arnheim claims that all traditional theories of expression deny what he avows, namely, that there is an intrinsic connection "between perceived appearance and the expression it conveyed." (448) His account of expression in art is broader than any other.

The narrowest view of expression is that only things with minds can express. A broader one is that objects, trees and rocks alike, can be seen to express, but only on analogy with our experiences. Theodor Lipps, the theorist of empathy, gave this explanation of how we can find expression in the inanimate columns of a temple. Arnheim describes Lipps' position: "When I look at the columns I know from past experience the kind of mechanical pressure and counterpressure that occurs in them. Equally from past experience, I know how I should feel myself if I were in the place of the columns and if those physical forces acted upon and within my own body." (448) More generally, and in the words of Lipps, "When I project my strivings and forces into nature I do so also as to the way my strivings and forces make me feel, that is, I project my pride, my courage, my stubbornness, my lightness, my playful assuredness, my tranquil complacence. Only thus my empathy with regard to nature becomes truly aesthetic empathy." (448)

The viewer infers from her own experience of what it is like to bear such a weight that so it is for the columns to bear the weight. Only then can the columns be said to express the tension caused by the pressures and counterpressures acting on it. Few there are, however, who acknowledge how much what the columns express depends on *the particular dynamic qualities of the percept*, not on the memories and imagination of the perceiver. (448) Here is where we are the moment before Arnheim steps onto the stage with his rich account of visual perception.

Thanks to the Enlightenment the perceptible qualities of physical objects are routinely divided into those independent of the viewer—the primary qualities of size, shape, number, position, and motion—and those not independent—the secondary qualities of color, sound, touch, taste, and smell. The perception of sensory qualities is a function of the way the object's primary qualities impinge on the perceiver's sense organs. This view has created a bias in favor of an object's measurable qualities, and Arnheim observes that we are apt to think that having measured an object and perhaps included its color and texture, we have fairly described all we see, using only qualities that are static and subjective subjective because sensory qualities depend on how perceiving subjects are affected by the motions of the sense-quality-free molecules of which physical objects are composed.

Arnheim's thesis is that objects have dynamic qualities and "visual perception consists in the experiencing of visual forces." (412) The forces are best thought of as directed tensions and are to be sought in the object itself. A few simple examples will have to suffice to argue the point that we directly see dynamic qualities and do not infer them from our experience. His claim is that "every visual object is eminently a dynamic affair" and that this is overlooked because we are in the habit of giving metric descriptions of, for example, an equilateral triangle, reds and oranges side by each on a canvas, and any movement. (412) Described statically they are, respectively, three equal straight lines meeting each other at angles of 60 degrees; wavelengths of 700 and 610 milli-microns; and an object moving at a certain speed in a certain direction. These descriptions fail to include what we actually experience, however, which is "the primary quality of all perception, [namely,] the aggressive outward pointing of the triangle, the dissonant clash of the hues, the onrush of the movement." (412)

I end this recital of the views of Beardsley and Arnheim on aesthetic expression with the words of two artists. T. S. Eliot said of a Chinese jar "it moves perpetually in its stillness." Leonardo Da Vinci said of any painted figure absent this quality that it is "doubly dead, since it is dead because it is a figment and dead again when it shows movement neither of the mind or of the body." (413) The classical Chinese painter following the first principle laid out by Hsieh Ho in the fifth century would make two telling additions. One is that a whole work is dead if it fails to move perpetually in its stillness and the other, that it is dead when it shows no movement not only of the mind or the body, but also of the universe. What the additions tell is shown particularly in the two historical texts to which I now turn.

Hsieh Ho, The Six Principles of Painting (5th century)

In the late fifth century, Hsieh Ho wrote a book called *Criticism of Painting* in which he listed six technical factors of painting and said of them that few artists mastered them all. He then ranked twenty-seven artists into six grades, depend-

ing on which techniques they mastered and how well. The importance of the paragraph in which he lists the factors cannot be underestimated. In *The Chinese Theory of Art: Translations from the Masters of Chinese Art* (Putnam 1967), Lin Yutang called it the most influential paragraph ever written on Chinese art and identified the first technique as the one undisputed goal of art in China.

Here are the techniques, with no interpretations given. "The first is: Spirit Resonance (or Vibration of Vitality) and Life Movement. The second is: Bone manner (structural) Use of the Brush. The third is: Conform with the Objects (to obtain) Likeness. The fourth is: Apply the Colors according to the Characteristics. The fifth is: Plan and Design, Place and Position (i.e. composition). The sixth is: To Transmit Models by Drawing," that is, to copy the master. (Siren, 1936; 2005:19)

Because these principles are so important, I give Chang Yen-yuan's statement of them as well. Lin Yutang said of this critic who flourished in the midninth century that we owe our knowledge of ancient Chinese art history to him more than to anyone else.(Kutang 1967: 43) Chang Yen-tuan wrote: "Hsieth Ho in ancient times said: 'What are the six techniques? First, creating a life-like tone and atmosphere; second, building structure through brush-work; third, depicting the forms of things as they are; fourth, appropriate colouring; fifth, composition; and sixth, transcribing and copying'." (51)

Much is made in the critical literature about how the Chinese characters of the six are to be translated and, indeed, whether or not their syllables can be treated separately. The words for the characters in the first canon are *ch'i-yun sheng-tung*. I will not here pass judgment on such disagreements among scholars, however.[44] Nor will I discuss each of the six, which are given in decreasing order

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[4]Osvald Siren separates the syllables. He says *ch'i* signifies the life-breath of everything, mountains and trees as well as men and beasts, and *yun* signifies resonance, harmonious vibrations, while *sheng* means life or birth and *tung*, physical movement. The whole phrase, then, can be translated as "resonance or vibration of the vitalizing spirit and movement of life." (Siren, 22)

Lin Yutang takes Siren to task for not understanding Chinese grammar, insisting that *Ch'i-yun* is one noun with two syllables that means "tone and atmosphere" and *sheng-tung* is one adjective with two syllables meaning "fully alive, moving, lifelike." Together they mean "a vital tone and atmosphere." Lin Yutang maintains that this phrase is never ambiguous to a Chinese, even though other critics say that, on the contrary, the phrase is richly ambiguous, which is precisely why it can serve as the goal of the art of different periods and styles. Since it is ambiguous to non-Chinese speakers, Lin cites six English translations of the principle and selects that of the Japanese Taki Seiichi, "spiritual tone and life movement," as the one closest to the Chinese and endorses the then cur-

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of importance, though the sixth, "to transmit models by drawing," is different in status from the other five. Copying is something commonly done in order to learn the technical side of the art, yet no artist can master the all-important first principle, "spirit resonance and life movement," simply by copying the works that display it. By the end of the Ming dynasty in 1644 art was for the most part limited to slavish imitation of the styles of the ancients, and this state of affairs inspired the revolutionary expressionist credo of the artist Shih-t'ao, the second of the four texts to be discussed below.

Details about its translation aside, the first canon can be read as specifying what is to be expressed in works of art. "Express" is a transitive verb so that in all cases of expression *something* is expressed. It is not enough to say that what the canon says is to be expressed is resonance of spirit and movement of life, for this invites the question, "the spirit and life of *what*?" Of the painted subjects and their harmony with each other and the universe. It does not follow that the only thing that can be expressed in a successful work is the resonance of spirit and the movement of life. The artist perforce expresses this *in some way*, and his hand or heart or mind might be so distinctive as to show through the work, to be, in other words, expressed in and by the work. Nor does it follow that every work will express what has also been translated as "tone and atmosphere," but no work can be great if it does not.

Can we be helped in our understanding of this canon by looking at a possible counterpart in the West? An obvious candidate is the lifelikeness valued in the art of Renaissance when, for example, it might be said of a human figure that it seemed to be alive, that all it lacked was breath itself. Unfortunately, this seems not to be a counterpart since, first, the figure is said only to look as though it were alive, possessed of *sheng-tung* (life movement), not to look as though it were marked by *ch'i yun* (spirit resonance), the spirit that pulses through the universe. Yet the first principle requires both. Second, the quality is predicated of a figure in the painting and not of the painting itself. Better, the lifelikeness is predicated of the satisfaction of what the third principle bids the artist to do, "conform with the objects (to obtain) likeness," not of what the more important second bids him, to assure that there is "bone manner [in the] (structural) use of the brush," that is, to "build structure through brush work."

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rently used "rhythmic vitality" as correctly expressing the Chinese meaning. We have here disagreement about translations but little in the way of interpretation.

Titian, for example, paints a female nude. Oil paint is put to woven canvas so as to "conform with the female nude (to obtain) likeness."[5] The sense of lifelikeness comes from the qualities conveyed by the paint itself, which is applied in transparent layers that seem to glow, creating the impression of warm, moist, living flesh. Titian is a genius of color and light, not of line, not of "bone manner in the structural use of the brush." He paints light as various textures—of skin, hair, silk, glass, metal, trees, sky, clouds—variously reflect it and as light probes the colors to reach the primary colors of which all others are composed. Titan's use of light and color to capture the lifelikeness of the female nude is a dramatic example of the difference between the arts of the West and China. Let us, then, put aside the effort to understand the first principle by looking at Western art and try instead to get help with the second canon.

Look at what the second canon involves. Osvald Siren calls the structural brushwork of the Chinese painter the backbone and life-nerve of his art, qualities whose importance cannot be exaggerated. (20) The ninth century critic Chang Yen-yuan, the first interpreter of the six canons, said of the importance of the vital spirit and the brush of the first and second canons, respectively, that he who produces a picture "through the concentration of his spirit creates a real picture ... In real pictures every brush stroke reveals life. He who deliberates and moves the brush intent upon making a picture, misses to a still greater extent the art of painting, while he who cogitates and *moves the brush without any intention of making a picture*, reaches the art of painting." (31) (Emphasis added.)

This quotation is as much about the vital spirit expressed in a work of art as it is about how the expression is the effect of the brushstroke. Most important of all, however, it is about the state of mind of the artist. What his work reveals is the vital spirit, the "tone and atmosphere," of the universe and of everything in it. For the artist each thing does what Gerard Manley Hopkins describes as "flinging forth its name." It is but for the artist to listen and to let himself hear and feel the "rhythmic vitality," the life, of all things. Better said, the artist expresses not the vitality of the universe but the resonance it sets up in him. In particular, the vital spirit and life movement of the objects on which he concentrates enter him in such a way that he "moves the brush without any intention of making a picture." He becomes, as it were, a medium for the objects' spirit that he then, through his hand and brush, transmits to the paper, expressing their spirit in his painting.

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[5] In doing so, Titian obeys the third principle of Chinese classical art, which is to conform with the objects (to obtain) likeness.

The just-discussed quotation from Chang Yen-yuan is said by Siren to capture what was said over and over by the ancient philosophers, whether they were Confucian, Taoist, or Buddhist: "To understand the meaning or significance of a thing, one must become the thing, harmonize one's consciousness with it and reach the mental attitude that brings knowledge without intellectual deliberation."[66]

A two-pronged difference between Chinese and Western aesthetics is adumbrated in these words, one that turns on the tendency of the West to draw and then respect boundaries between kinds of things and inquiries, and of the East to seek oneness among the things and inquiries the West separates. The disciplines of philosophy, religion, and aesthetics separated out from each other in the course of time in the West, but not in the East. This is the first prong of the difference.

The second is that human beings are one with nature, with heaven and earth, in the worldview of the East, while they are deeply different in kind from nature in the framework laid out by Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the subsequent philosophers who are their heirs. As they understand it, humans alone have reason and this, it is supposed, gives them power over nature together with the authority to exercise the power. The most dramatic difference between humankind and the rest of the universe in the Western worldview stems from the monotheism inherited from the Jews. In human beings alone is shadowed forth the powers of judgment and will possessed by the God who created them in his image: hence, their uniqueness.

It does not follow, of course, that the Western man and woman cannot have a sense of what the Chinese call "li," the "inner law of being, the inner nature of things," a sense that the universe is alive and that one is somehow connected to it. But the image of a creating and judging God is so deeply entrenched in the conceptual schemes regnant in the West that it is not "natural" for a Western artist to describe what she is doing in her art as expressing a vital spirit that

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[6] Also from Siren: "Or, in the words of Confucius: 'He who is in harmony with Nature hits the mark without effort and apprehends the truth without thinking'. The attitude is exactly the same as the Taoist idea of the identity of the subjective and the objective. 'Only the truly intelligent understand this principle of identity. They do not view things as apprehended by themselves subjectively, but transfer themselves into the position of the things viewed. And viewing them thus they are able to comprehend them, nay, to master them; and he who can master them is near. So it is, to place oneself in subjective relation with externals, without consciousness of their objectivity, this is Tao'." (24–25)

pulses through all there is or as inviting this spirit to resonate in her and express itself through her art.

We return to the question of counterparts, having found the lifelikeness sought in the Renaissance not to be adequate to the first canon. In the West it was not until the appearance of Impressionism that we get something comparable to the *attention to the brushwork* of the second principle of Chinese art. With Impressionism comes the focus both on modern life, rather than on events from the classical world, the Bible, or history, and on how things are perceived, how they appear to the eye alone, absent interference from the mind. The strokes and daubs and dots of paint, the work of the brush, captured the light and life of the times and places the Impressionists painted. The paint did the work, not the figures that emerged from the painted surface. In a Titian nude, oil paint substitutes for flesh, whereas in an Impressionist painting, bodies, objects, sky, and sea *just are* daubs of colored paint. Colors and shapes are all that we see in the world, as they are all we see on the canvas. In a similar way, in a Chinese painting, the mountains just are the lines the brush made. The brush strokes are the mountain's bones. In Impressionist art color and paint do more of the work than they do in traditional Chinese art, but in both the brush stroke matters more than it tends to in pre-Impressionist art.

Paul Cezanne formalized the paint strokes, making his painted mountains and towns out of cubes, planes, and blotches of paint. Even the portrait of his dead wife, she who, Arthur Danto noted, had aroused such passions in him, was reduced to the geometry of painted shapes. The power of the paint itself subsides in Cubism, a natural place for Cezanne's blocky lines to go, but Surrealism appeared to exemplify the Chinese idea that *spontaneity is a necessary condition* for achieving the art of painting. In Surrealism neither Impressionism's perceiving eye nor Cezanne's geometrizing hand holds sway. The unconscious does. But what the unconscious mind governs and what, therefore, is spontaneous is the subjects of the paintings, not the manner in which they are painted. The painted subjects are as fully and deliberately articulated as both the dreams reconstructed by the patient lying on the psychoanalyst's couch and the canvases of Titian.

Not until Abstract Expressionism does the focus on *the spontaneous deployment of the brush* equal that of the Chinese artist. But with this difference, which is all the difference. The Western painter expresses himself, his angels and demons alike. Thanks to the Second World War, the art center of the West had moved to New York, a city whose artists did not have in their past what the European had—hundreds of years of art history and the direct experience of the modernizing movements of the twentieth century that traveled westward from

Russia to Germany. This European history did not stand in the American artists' way of making art in a world turned upside down by the totalitarian regimes whose values were inimical to their own. Even in America, whose troops fought only on foreign soil in the World War, the one safe place seemed to be within the individual, in a place deeper even than reason, whose moorings had been loosed by the debacles of the first half of the century.

What does it mean to say the Abstract Expressionist expressed himself? The historical conditions I outlined were no doubt necessitating conditions. Thrown back on themselves as they were, the artists could do little more than what the T'ang critic Chang Yen-yuan said the good artist does, namely, create a real picture, in which every brush stroke reveals life, through the concentration of his spirit. The artist "who cogitates and moves the brush without any intention of making a picture, reaches the art of painting." (Siren: 230-31) If we understand the ideas of concentrating the spirit and cogitating as, say, the artist's shutting out the world and listening to himself, then the acts of painting of Jackson Pollack and Willem DeKooning are captured by Chang Yen-yuan's words. The idea of the self in play is that of the individuating center of the conscious and unconscious minds constructed from the joint legacies of Rousseau and the Enlightenment (the self as a self-interested rational atom) and Freud (the self as driven by unconscious instincts of life and death). Here it is not simply the referents of the words "spirit" and "cogitate" that are different, but their meanings.

The Chinese painter does not express his individuality. The most we can say having read Hsieh Ho is that the Chinese artist expresses the spirit resonance and life movement of heaven and earth.

Shih-t'ao, An Expressionist Credo *(17th century)*

Shih-t'ao was a member of an imperial family of the Ming dynasty that ended with the invasion of the Manchus in 1644. He became a recluse upon the accession of the Manchus to the throne the Ming had occupied since 1368. The credo he wrote during his years of a monk-like life has been called the "best and deepest essay on art written by a revolutionary artist." (Yutang 1967: 137) Shih-t'ao is called revolutionary for urging artists to create rather than continue merely to copy the style of the ancients. Ming artists had come to put the sixth canon, "copy the ancients," first. Since the opposite of copying is innovating or creating, and since Shih decried the art practice of his time, creating was the theme of this document that is remarkable on two counts.

One is that something he calls the one-stroke method is, by his lights, the quintessential art action: it *is* the art of painting. The other is that heaven and earth are captured in his essay and, by implication, in paintings, by the pairs hills-and-streams, mountains-and-rivers, brush-and-ink, stone-and-water, as items on the Saussurian paradigm list tumble into each other.[7]

The One-stroke Method (Section 1 of the Credo)

This manifesto demonstrates the sheer materiality of Chinese art, an art whose matter is en-spirited, "born of the spirit and born again," in Hegel's words, but matter nonetheless. Moreover, it gives to art, born as it is of one stroke of the brush, the role that in the West is assigned to language, whose inscriptions and incisions cut up the ribbons of thought into concepts, and the ribbons of sound into words. The God of Genesis said "Let there be light" and divided the light from the darkness. Words came first: the world is born of a word, not a one-stroke. Again, the Gospel of John begins "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God." In Greek, "word" is rendered by "logos" that translates "reason" as well as "word."

Where the Nicene Creed of the Christian begins "I believe in one God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth," the expressionist creed of Shih-t'ao would begin "I believe in the one-stroke, which is that 'out of which all phenomena are born, [and is] applied by the gods and [is] to be applied by man'." (Yutang, 140) He said that in the primeval chaos there was no difference, and only when difference was introduced was method or law born. It was born of the one-stroke, which "contains in itself the universe and beyond; thousands and myriads of strokes and ink all begin here and end here." (Yutang, 141)

Difference and law and language come into being only after the action of the one-stroke. The action of making one-stroke—which is how all brushwork begins—not a word, generates the world, even though it might not have been a brush that made the one-stroke that brought difference and, hence, everything else into being. Shih-t'ao goes on to say that an artist should be able to show the universe in one stroke, which one can do, however, only if one's wrist is fully

responsive. To what is the wrist responsive? Not to the appearance of the furniture of heaven and earth, to things, but to their nature, their spirit. I quote at length a hymn to the movement of the painter's wrist and to the way it moves the brush to express the vital spirit, the tone and atmosphere, of the water and stone, the rivers and hills that are the life blood and skeletal structure of the world.

> If the wrist is not fully responsive, then the picture is not good; if the picture is not good it is because the wrist fails to respond. Give it life and luster by circular movement and bends, and by stopping movement give it spaciousness. It shoots out, pulls in; it can be square or round, go straight or twist along, upwards or downwards, to the right and to the left. Thus it lifts and twists in sudden turns, breaks loose or cuts across, like the gravitation of water, or the shooting up of a flame, naturally and without the least straining effect. In this way it penetrates all inner nature of things, gives form to all expressions … With a casual stroke, hills and streams, all life and vegetation and human habitation take their form and gesture, the scene and the feeling connected with it caught hidden or exposed. (Yutang, 141)

The pulsing energy of the prose captures the falling down of water and shooting up of fire, movements of the body of the world. Having read Shih-t'ao, can we say more than that the artist expresses the spirit resonance and life movement of the world's body? Yes. We can infer from his text something about how the artist does it: by quieting and gathering himself so as to be able to "understand the inner law and catch the outward gestures of the delicate complexities of hills and streams and human figures" (Yutang, 141) The understanding informs the painting hand so that hand and controlling wrist know the inner law and outward gestures of things. Mind and hand are one as, then, are the brush strokes, the bone manner, the structure, of the hills and streams taking shape under the brush.

Western artists whose metaphysical and epistemological frameworks are far removed from those of the Chinese have described what can happen when they are at their most creative as "becoming one with what they are making." The work takes on a life of its own and comes out of the artist as naturally as breath: one could not tell the artist from her art. But there is this difference from what Shih-t'ao describes: the Western artist feels the work to be one with herself, the Chinese artist feels herself and her art to be one with the world.

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[7] On the model of language drawn by Fernand de Saussure, the paradigm for a word in a sentence is the list of words that can substitute for it. The list can preserve truth, for example, when "mother's husband" is put in place of "father" in "My father came home." Or it can preserve only grammaticality, as when "dog" is put for "father" in the same sentence.

Hills and Streams (Section 8 of the Credo)

Our critic said the world with which the Chinese artist feels himself one is captured by the figure of hills and streams that provide, respectively, the structure and lifeblood of the world. Why does he say this and what does it mean? Might he have said it because hills and streams exemplify certain contraries: high and low, still and moving, relatively changeless and always changing, solid and liquid? Or is it because they exemplify the functions in mountains and waters that "lie not in themselves, but in their respective silence and mobility"? (Yutang, 156) Mountains are silent and still, while waters move and make noise: oceans roar, brooks babble, waterfalls thunder, waves lap the shore.

In the language of the first canon, they are the *ch'i-yun* (spirit resonance) *sheng-tung* (life movement) of the universe. *Ch'i-yun sheng-tung* is the "rhythmic vitality' of everything that is and is, therefore, the vital spirit of the artist as well. When the artist sits in contemplation before taking up his brush, he becomes aware of the spirit of all things resonating in him and is then in the position to "meet and comprehend" the spirit that inhabits the hills and streams. Why the spirit of these? Because--and again I quote at length, this time the final section of the *Credo* that the translator calls "the strangest discourse" he has ever translated: "For the immensity of the world is revealed only by the function of water, and water encircles and embraces it through the pressure of mountains. If the mountains and water do not come together and function, there will be nothing to circulate with or about, nothing to embrace. And if there is no circulation and embracing, there will be no means of life and growth." (Yutang, 155)

There is here a materiality that is basic and grand. Our seventeenth century molecules in motion are replaced by water and stone, stone, like the mountains, solid, still, and silent.

"The Watery Turn in Contemporary Chinese Art" (21st century)

This is the title of an article by David Clarke that appeared in *Art Journal*, a publication of the College Art Association, in the winter of 2006. (2006: 57-77) His thesis, that "much water-themed contemporary art in China can be best understood as a contestation of state rhetoric concerning the control of water," is credible, the arguments for it ingenious." (68)

Part of the article's significance lies in its reversing the direction of the strategy of the ideologically driven art that dominated the artworld during the rule of Mao. Mao had become a critic, telling artists what to paint--subjects intended to inculcate the tenets of communism in the minds of the people. Art's message was to be to the people. In an elegant reversal, Clarke reads contemporary water themed art as a message to the ruling body. The art whose subject or medium is water is intended to protest the rhetorical use made by the state of its water projects. These projects range from the fifteen hundred kilometer Red Flag Canal—built in the 1960s by manual laborers who had to drill through a mountain to clear a path for the canal—to the much-vaunted Three Gorges Dam, water rising behind which had displaced nearly a million people by 2005.

Clarke argues that the artists are contesting the discursive dimension of the political sphere, one of whose jobs is to maintain the power and the image of legitimacy of the ruling communist party. There is, he notes, an official political discourse on water, and it is this that the current aesthetic discourse in China disputes: not what the government has done, but how it has vested the practical effects of its water projects with symbolic meaning. The projects are used for propaganda purposes: since the party can control even nature, folly it would be to challenge its control over the people.

The way the government characterizes human beings as engaged in a battle with nature flies in the face of the traditional Confucian belief in the harmony and oneness of human beings with heaven and earth. Since the communist government portrays itself as being everything to its people, it is with *it* that the people should seek to be one and not with nature's waters with which the government is at war. Remember the words of the final section of Shih-t'ao's *Expressionist Credo*, "for the immensity of the world is revealed only by the function of water, and water encircles and embraces it through the pressure of mountains." (Yutang, 155) On the traditional Chinese view, mountains and rivers configure the heavens and earth, and Shih-t'ao here shows how together the two embrace the world.

It is China's waters, not its mountains, that the state seeks to manage with its massive projects, taking water to where none had been and using it to generate electrical power. The communist party itself has assumed the role of the mountains in exerting the pressure that enables water to perform its functions, at times in ways that the water could not have done without the changes engineered by the party. Like stone, the party is solid, not to be moved, not to be changed, silent in giving no reasons for its decisions and answering no questions about them. Stone needs water, as water needs the pressure of stone in the traditional scheme of the order of things in heaven and earth.

Clark's contention is that the government's flouting the *control over nature* demonstrated by the projects to shore up its own power has caused artists to protest the political use to which the canals and dams are put. His thesis is that

the number of current water-themed artworks can be explained by interpreting them as protests against the government. The protest is twofold. It is against the government's use of its power over the waters as an emblem of its power over the people, and the inference of its right to govern from the success of the water projects.

To put a different slant on Clarke's conclusion that China's massive water projects serve a political end, I suggest that the rhetorical use to which the party puts these projects is primarily ontological. It needs the water to maintain the fiction of what it takes itself to be, namely, the social equivalent of the mountains, the complement of the rivers together with which the mountains comprise the world. The fiction is that the communist-controlled Chinese government, like the stone of the mountains and the water of the rivers, is natural and therefore necessary. Rather as the medieval kings evoked the sanction of God, claiming to be his appointees, so the party evokes the sanction of nature, showing itself to have authority even over the waters they can force to bow to its will. By thus dramatizing its control of the waters, it appropriates them as partners in its rhetorical identification of itself with the mountains. An ontological drive underlies and supports the political one that Clarke details. Its logic is this: if the party is seen by the people as the vehicle of the "rhythmic vitality," the "spirit resonance and life movement" of the universe, its power over them is assured.

The country's need for water is, however, not only ontological and political, but also practical and pressing. China abounds in rivers, having more than fifteen hundred, as well as the longest and oldest man-made waterway, the Great Canal. The rivers, then, are crucial to China's flourishing because they irrigate its land for agriculture and unify the whole by connecting its far reaches. However, there are two problems. One has to do with distribution, the other with industrialization. About 44% of the population and 58% of the cultivated land are in the northern and northeastern provinces, while only about 15% of the water resources are there.[8] Furthermore, industrial waste is polluting the rivers, and few are the resources in place to purify the water that irrigates the crops and supplies the people's drinking water. That China's waters need to be managed is clear, and the government projects, necessary.

My different claim is that the government uses its successful control of the waterways to foster the idea of its *complicity with nature*, whose power it then arrogates to itself. What the artists are doing on my view is, then, not protesting against the government "usurpation" of the water discourse but simply reclaiming it. They do not want to do what the state has done in taking the discourse

[8] These figures are from the website: depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/geo/proper.htm

over and using it for its own purposes. We may say, however, that the discourse on water symbolically belongs to the artists insofar as the qualities attributable to water are attributable to their art and even to the New China, which is creating itself in a way not unlike the way the artists are creating their art. Like water, art is fluid. Moving and changing, it reflects and refracts light. Such light as falls upon it is not absorbed but given back, now marked by what it touched. Finally, art can murmur or roar but is rarely silent.

The function of waters according to Shih-t'ao is their mobility: they "encircle and embrace" the world. What does it mean to say that art does this? It means that art captures and expresses the "spirit resonance and life movement," no longer the timeless spirit of the unity of humans, heaven, and earth, however, but now in the timely spirit of the history-inflected China. This is the China that opened itself to foreign investment in 1979 in a world whose nations, their cultures and commerce alike, were uniting through the worldwide web. The art of the Chinese avant-garde is mobile, its movement both cause and effect of two sorts of changes, in society and in individuals. One, it reflects and contributes to changes in the society, and, two, it changes its audiences by expressing what they could not otherwise have seen, felt, or heard in the cacophony of the competing discourses of capitalism and communism.

Look now at several water-themed works to see a common strategy emerge that reveals what contemporary artists are expressing through the works and how this differs from that expressed by both classical Chinese and typical Western artists. Clarke characterizes *Fighting the Flood, Red Flag Canal* (1994), a performance by Wang Jin, as an example of an artist "playfully dismantling the rhetoric of state power" of a "Maoist-era symbol of socialist success conceived as triumph over water." (70) The performance began on August 14, 1994, a day when the water supply to part of the city was interrupted. From a bridge over the Red Flag Canal in Henan Province, Wang Jin emptied a fifty-kilogram bag of dry red organic pigment into the canal. The act was playful in literalizing the metaphoric association of red with Chinese communism and was a protest of the" pollution" of the canal with communist propaganda by polluting it with red pigment. "Too much red is now revealed as a bad thing," Clarke suggests, and since the pigment made the water look as though it were stained by blood, it could, he continues, refer to lives sacrificed to building the bridge or to building the party over the whole of its history. (70)

If the performance is read not as a protest but as an effort by Wang Jin to take back the water from the state, then what Wang did was this: whereas the canal had been "red" because the government that dug it was communist, now it is red because it was painted red—to paint something is to apply pigment to it.

Now it is really red, but only for a while. Water, mobile and changing, cannot be painted for more than a short time, but for the time of the performance Wang Jin reduced the "red" of the communist state to the red of the artist's pigment, suggesting that the communist red is as ephemeral as the artist's. Water finally belongs to no one, no more to the political party of the engineers who re-direct and dam its flow than to the artist who paints it. Wang Jin's red pigment brings the "red" in "Red Flag Canal" down to earth. Red is nothing but a color, and the water resists it.

Contemporary artists are repeatedly showing what one cannot do to water: paint it, print on it, write with it or under it. Song Dong in *Printing on Water* (1996) stood in a sacred river in Tibet and repeatedly brought a wooden block of the sign for "water" down to the water, as though to print "water" on water. The river resisted the coition of word and thing. The word is not the thing. In *Writing Diary with Water* (an intermittent and sometimes private diary begun in1995), the same artist writes on a stone slab with a calligraphy brush using water instead of ink. As soon as the water dries, the written trace disappears, as spoken words do when the sounds fade. Even written words do not last.

In a 1997 performance set amidst huge stones through which a stream runs, LaoZhu wrote a string of poems on a long silk scroll. The scroll was unrolled along the stream, sometimes across rocks in the stream, sometimes submerged in its water. Brush and ink have been likened to stone and water: with the brush, the artist gives shape, bones, to his painting, as stones do to the land; and ink is liquid, as water is. In the row of photographs that document the performance are the hills and streams that comprise the world in the traditional view. In the hand of LaoZhu are the brush and ink with which he can express the spirit and life movement of the world. The reference to the tradition is deepened by the presence of invited friends and of musicians playing traditional instruments, both of which allude to meetings of the Chinese literati. This is a reference to the world-views and practices of the tradition with a difference, however, because when the scroll was submerged in the stream, LaoZhu kept writing on it even though the water washed the inked characters away. The metaphoric identification of ink and water cannot be translated into a real one: water washes ink away.

How do thse artworks show their artists trying to take back the discourse of water from the state? Individuals or institutions can make something theirs by mixing either their labor or their language with it. The artists are trying to mix their language with the water, and the water's resistance to being caught in its network proves water to be primitive, able to be appropriated by none. I understand "primitive" in the Barthesian sense, namely, as that which escapes culture and its languages. The artists are reclaiming the discourse on water for water

itself. So far as they succeed in wresting the rights over the discourse from the state, they will also have reclaimed the rivers for the hills, whose identity was being usurped by the political party in power. If the integrity of the rivers is regained, so, it is reasonable to think, will be that of the hills.

The traditional worldview in which water and stone comprise heaven and earth will be back in place for artists and everyone to use as they re-define themselves in a China made new by capitalism and a world made new by globalization. Tradition will have won a place, its music there for the artists and all who would listen to hear and to respond in the myriad ways artists and audiences\\\can respond. In trying to reclaim the water, contemporary artists are not simply turning to China's past to drown out the dissonance of the *prima facie* competing political and economic discourses or to recover a traditional Chinese identity.

Rather as the communist party identified itself with the solidity and silence of the mountains, the artists are identifying themselves with what Shih-t'ao claims to be the function of rivers: mobility. They strive to move their audiences to question along with them, who they are, what art is, what it is to be Chinese and to be an artist. The movement is below the level of the discourses of communism and capitalism, below even what Foucault identified as the archeological depth where what can be said and thought is specified. It is the wellspring of creativity, where one steers by instinct, all rules foregone.

I think that what, finally, is being reclaimed by contemporary Chinese artists is what distinguishes the traditional Chinese view of the world from the Western, namely, the belief in the oneness of human beings with the universe. Everything in the universe—all nature, all matter, all energy—is believed to be endowed with *Ch'i-yun sheng-tung*, whose expression was the most important of a traditional artist's goals. This conception of spirit has, so far as I know, no counterpart in any view of the world laid out in the West.

Communism and now capitalism, along with the industrial and information revolutions, have cut a broad swath over the timeless landscape of the classical Chinese world, so that it is no longer the One with which intimacy is sought by the contemporary artist. But it *is* nature, its heartbeat, not its beauty or its scenery, a nature that can nourish and destroy, one that can lay a person low or strike her with awe. And it *is* China, a country whose history is long and is written on the land.

In the second comprehensive exhibition in the United Kingdom devoted to contemporary Chinese art are stunning examples of artworks expressive of contemporary artists' sense of their oneness with nature, with the land, and its rivers and hills.

The Real Thing: Contemporary Art From China *(21ˢᵗ century)*[9]

The Real Thing: Contemporary Art From China is the title of what is misleadingly described as the first such exhibition in the United Kingdom.[10] On view at Tate Liverpool from 30 March to 10 June 2007, none of the work shown had been made prior to 2000, the year of the first exhibition of contemporary international art in China that was organized by a state institution, the Shanghai Museum of Art. A satellite exhibition entitled *Fuck Off* was curated by Ai Weiwei and, surprisingly, went unchallenged by the authorities.[11]

No curatorial thesis guided the selection of work in *The Real Thing*, which evolved through extended discussions with a range of artists, critics, and curators. Its curators, critic Karen Smith who has lived in Beijing since 1992 and Shanghai-based artist Xu Zhen, did not want to limit the works shown to what fit an art critical thesis. Rather, they wanted the exhibition to reflect "the variety and strength of contemporary practice." (2007: 10) The commercialization of the art market coupled with the interest generated by China's having a *bona fide* artistic avant-garde have created the temptation for artists to make works that are saleable rather than creative. Because of the presence of these factors, the curators took "a creative risk in inviting proposals from those artists we thought most interesting, which provided an opportunity for artists to create a work in relative freedom from market considerations." (12)

The curators were struck by the diversity of views within the art world and by the variety of genres and styles with which many individual artists work. Within this plurality, no practice or style appeared that could be said to represent Chinese art. Moreover, "any idea of a unitary or coherent identity, for the country as much as for the art, has collapsed into an open space of infinite possibility." (11) Even though the curators set out with no presuppositions, certain themes emerged. Here is their description of much art made since 2000: "more

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[9] I thank Professors Noel Carroll and Beate Schewik for sending me the *TLS* review of this exhibition. Tanya Harrod, "Checked by Hand: The documentary strength of new art form China," *TLS*, June 1, 2007, 18-19. Philip Tanari also reviewed the exhibition in *Artforum*, September 2007, 454-456.

[10] There was an exhibition in London in the autumn of 2006, "China Power Station Part 1," the result of collaboration between the Serpentine Gallery in London and the Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art in Oslo. "China Power Station Part II" will be shown this fall in Oslo at the Astrup Fearnley Museum.

[11] I discuss works from this exhibition in Mary Bittner Wiseman, "Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Avant-Garde Art," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 65, No. 1, Winter 2007, 109-121.

personal and sincere, concerned with reflecting upon one's own place as an individual, rather than seeking to establish a collective position, in a society that is undergoing such rapid changes as to undermine any stable reference point. In short, a search for authenticity, be it private or public." (13) Times of social and economic upheaval often create the felt need for those living through them to search for validity, legitimacy, authenticity. In the search for genuineness great art has been made.

Given the relative isolation of Chinese artists from the art of the rest of the world, and in particular from the history of Western art, during the rule of Mao, the artists do not locate themselves in the master narrative of modern art. They are, then, free of it and are in this way different from artists of the West. Although Chinese painters were exposed to modernism in the early decades of the 20ᵗʰ century, they were denied exposure from the 1940s when the art was denounced as bourgeois and corrupting. The Western art world reintroduced itself to China in the 1980s with Pop Art, which soon became Political Pop, whose works equalized communism and capitalism by reducing their slogans to kitsch. This was a borrowed style, at most a vehicle for speaking up and speaking out, but not "the real thing."

Several works from *The Real Thing* help to demonstrate that contemporary Chinese artists are ringing three changes on what the ancients bid them to do. In the words of the ancient critic Chang Yen-yuan, to make a painting of something, the artist must understand it, and as we saw above to do this he must "become the thing, *harmonize one's consciousness* with it and reach the mental attitude that brings *knowledge without intellectual deliberation.*" (Siren, 24) (Emphases added.) The first change is that contemporary artists use things other than brush and ink to make art. They use their bodies in performance art, various objects in installations, the land itself in earth art.[12] Most of the artworks are intended to be short-lived, living on in photographs and videos. Their subjects are some physical part of the performance, installation, or earthwork, whereas the mountains and streams of Chinese ink paintings are not literally part of the painting. Nor do representations of the subject comprise the artwork, rather expressions of the resonance of the subject's spirit in the artist do.

The second change is that the contemporary artist harmonizes his body, rather than his consciousness, with what he is trying to understand. There is a level below the conscious one at which the body knows. Dancers, gymnasts, athletes all know this. The classical artist was often a scholar whose way to

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[12] This change is convincingly detailed by Yuedi Lui, *Philosophical Trends*, Vol. 331, No. 7, Beijing 2005.

knowledge was precisely intellectual deliberation, The contemporary artist, on the contrary, operates more nearly on the level of the dancer, the gymnast, or the athlete in operating below the level of discourse, which is, perforce, below the level of intellectual deliberation. This, then, is the third change, from the level on which a scholar operates to that on which a dancer or athlete does.

Toward the end of "The Watery Turn in Contemporary Chinese Art," David Clarke notes that Mao had a private political agenda he furthered with his swimming, An avid swimmer, Mao crossed the strong-flowing Yangtze River in 1956, showing his fitness as a man and, by implication, his fitness as the people's leader. That Mao used his prowess in the water as propaganda is no doubt true, but what is more interesting for my purposes is that whatever his reasons for making a public spectacle of his swimming, while he was swimming, he was *in the water*. This is no metaphorical oneness with nature but a real one.

The same strategy appears again and again in the work of contemporary Chinese artists. The metaphorical is made literal because the figures of language are rejected. Art is made, and life is lived in the new China—whose rules cannot be formulated until its languages are—below the level of language.[13] This is where the instincts are and where matter is. A grand materiality reigns—red is a pigment, ink is not water, and the spirit of the rivers resonates through the person who is in them.

Contemporary Chinese artists have made artworks in which individuals interact with water—Fang Lijun's *1994.2*, a 1994 oil painting of a man floating in a Matisse-blue sea, can be compared with Pierre Bonnard's 1925 *Nude in the Bath Tub* or his 1936 *Nude in the Bath*.[14] However, there are few such works in *The Real Thing*, whereas there are several striking works in which artists interact with mountains.

A 2005 performance documented by video stills and photographs entitled *8848 Minus 1.86* consisted of the artist Xu Zhen's taking the measure of Mount Everest. The performance was accompanied by a text that began with a factual account of the Himalayas and ended with the announcement that he was going to reduce the size of Everest, the tallest of the Himalayas. The mountain was given its English name in honor of Sir George Everest, who was the British surveyor-general of India responsible for the Great Trigonometric Survey of India

[13] I support this claim in "Subversive Strategies in Contemporary Chinese Avant-Garde Art."

[14] Water figures prominently in Linda Nochlin, *Bathers, Bodies, Beauty: The Visceral Eye* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006. See my review in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 65, No. 3, Summer 2007, 331-333

of 1802-1866 that will figure in another work discussed below. The height of the mountain was set at 8848 meters in 1856. Xu Zhen takes this measurement to be authoritative, even though an American team put a Global Positioning System on the highest bedrock in 1999 and found the mountain to be 8850 meters.

The account of the Himalayas closes with the announcement that on May 22, 2005 a Chinese team would climb to the summit of Everest to measure it again. Not until the end of this otherwise factual account does the artist write that "the Chinese citizen, Xu Zhen, and his team would climb Mount Everest, and cut off its top; reducing its height by 186 cm," which is Xu's height. This is "a task which, to the casual viewer, the team carried out successfully." (Smith and Zhen, 137) I will pretend that Xu Zhen did accompany the team that ascended to the summit and that the top of Everest was cut off. We are being treated to a simulacrum of the real world, a fictional world, and Xu Zhen wants us to suspend disbelief and look at the video stills and documentary photographs, and the refrigerated "summit" of Everest, as though he really had imposed himself on the mountain.

Was Xu Zhen one with the mountain in his performance? Yes, deliberately to climb a mountain is to put oneself into intimate relation with it. Xu Zhen would have done more than this, however. He would have left his mark on it by reducing its height by his own and, with that act, entered the history of the measurement of the height of the mountain. This hypothetical performance can be read either as an act of arrogant and bald self-assertion in the face of a powerful nature, or as a comment on how the exact measurement of the mountain does not touch its splendor or its sublimity. It is vast, and wonderful for that, regardless of whether it is more or less 1.86 of its meters.

Was the artist in harmony with the mountain on May 22, 2005? Yes, and they were equal partners in the encounter: it did not overwhelm him and he did not diminish it. In being Everest's equal, Xu would have shown himself to have captured the spirit of the mountain and therefore to have satisfied Hsieth Ho's first principle. He would have paid homage to the mountain by removing its peak and putting it on display, knowing that this made no difference to the mountain.

From the top of a mountain to its bowels, coal mines. Official Xinhua News Agency reports refer to coal mining as the "deadliest job in China" and to the mines as "killer mines." (Smith and Zhen, 162-163) "As China Roars, Pollution Reaches Deadly Extremes" read the four-column-wide headline on the front page of *The New York Times*, Sunday, August 26, 2007. "Just as the speed and scale of China's rise as an economic power has no clear parallel in history, so its pollution problem has shattered all precedents." The article continues, "The

growth derives ... from a staggering expansion of heavy industry and urbanization that requires colossal inputs of energy, almost all from coal, the most readily available, and dirtiest, source." And, we might add, the most dangerous. China accounts for 80% of the world's deaths from mining accidents of which there were 6000 in China in 2006.

Artists use water and mountains as media as well as subject matter of art, but I know of none who have used the insides of mountains as medium for art. In 2006, Yang Shoabin made a series of numbered oil paintings, at least eighteen, called *800 Metres*, titles which, like Xu Zhen's, cite numbers of meters with no hint as to what the meters measure.

Born in 1963, Yang Shoabin tells of growing up with Social Revolutionary Realism whose paintings are full of sunshine, blue skies, and workers portrayed as knights of the state. But, as he said, that time had passed, and when he returned to the coalmines in the town where he grew up, things were dire. He could "only marvel at the vitality of these workers, and the life force demonstrated by their children" whose life is about nothing beyond survival. (Smith and Zhen, 167) He asked how we are to view their situation today against the revolutionary socialism of China's recent history, and the force of the question led him to paint *800 Metres*.

Here the contemporary move is not from the metaphorical oneness with nature of the classical painters and thinkers to a real oneness. It is rather from the socialist state's identification of itself as that with which individuals should strive to harmonize themselves, to a non-ideological identification of the artist with the life of the coal miners. By implication, the artist identifies himself also with the mountain whose depths the miners engage as they work to wrest from it the coal necessary to sustain their country's economic boom.

Of the five paintings from the *800 Metres* series in the catalogue of *The Real Thing*, three, each approximately 2.5 by 3.3 feet, are close ups of miners' blackened faces. In one, there is one miner, in another, two, and in another, three. The man alone is set in the mine's changing room, the pair are in a cityscape, and the three are at the entrance to a mine where an elevator is taking men down and burrowing instruments stand idle. The other two of the five are large, almost 7 feet by more than 11. The workers in them are working, whereas in the other three they are looking out at the viewer. In one of the large paintings, four men are drilling into a rock that occupies more than half of the picture plane—the rock is a important as the men--and in the other, two men and three women, naked from the waist up, are in a coal bin sorting through pieces of coal. Two of the women are bent, as their ancestors had been in rice paddies for centuries, with their backs to the viewer. The third woman turns three-quarters of the way

toward the viewer, her breast revealed. Of the two male miners, one is bent as the women are and the other turns three-quarters toward the viewer, but does not confront the viewer as the woman does.

Were the viewer able to see the whole series, she would, were she responsive to the paintings, find the spirit of the miners resonate in her, and would, assuming that spirit resonance is transitive, find the spirit of the mountain's depths to resonate as well. The artist expressed the hope that *800 Metres* "will be read as a real critique of history and contemporary reality."(Smith and Zhen, 167) Yang Shoabin did not open himself to the timeless harmony of the realm comprised of heaven and earth, hills and streams, stone and water, to which the scholar-painter-poet opened himself in classical times, but to the material reality of a society whose greatest achievement, rapid industrialization, is also its biggest burden.[15] The real critique of contemporary reality that Yang Shoabin takes his *800 Metres* to be is effective only if the viewer of the work can open herself to the *ch'i-yun* (spirit resonance) and *sheng-tung* (life movement) of the earth's mountains through empathy with its miners.

There is a final work to be brought into this discussion about the contemporary Chinese artist's intimacy with the earth and about how their intimacy, not innocent of history, differs from that of earlier Chinese artists. This is a discussion mindful of the absence of any version of the desire to harmonize with the universe on the part of artists in the West. The work is *Railway from Llasa to Katmandu* ... a multi-media installation and performance work made by Qiu Zhijie in 2006-7.

The artist teaches at the China National Academy in Hangzhou. In June 2006 he took his students on a field trip to the western part of Sichuan where it borders on Tibet and is home to many Tibetan nationals. The initial purpose was to look for the origins of the myths of Shangri-La and to discover why it had become popular in the West after World War I "with the perceived bankruptcy of capitalistic ideals."(Smith and Zhen, 98) The idea of Shangri-La was born as the result of the first journey made across Tibet by an outsider, Nain Singh, a thirty-three year old Indian man who, in 1863, began two years of training under Captain T. G. Montgomerie of the Royal British Engineers in India. He was to gather enough data to map the territory from the Indian side of the Himalayas to Lhasa, Tibet's capital. Singh learned to walk in thirty-three inch leg irons so that he could measure precisely the distance he traveled and to measure his orientation and altitude "using a mercury-filled tea cup and a thermometer inserted

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[15] In September 2007, *The New York Times* began a three-part article on the problem of pollution in China.

into his walking stick." (Smith and Zhen, 98) This project was part of the Great Trigonometric Survey in India mentioned above.

Qui Zhijie believed that the opening of the Qinghai-Tibet railroad on July 1, 2006 would change the Tibetan traditional way of life as nothing else had, not even the imposition of Chinese rule in 1959. In honor of that first trip to Tibet in 1865, and on the eve of the intrusion of the modern world with the railroad, Qui Zhijie decided to walk (opposite the direction in which Nain walked) from Lhasa to Katmandu, which was the next leg planned for the railroad. He antici-pated the forward march of the railroad by making a facsimile of a rail for the track for this future leg. To this end he collected pieces of metal from people along his route, had them melted down and forged into a rail that he suspended in space--a sign of this being the world's highest railroad.

Moreover, to bring money to the artists in the region, he had them paint *tankas*--works that tell stories of holy men and disseminate spiritual values--describing Nain's journey. Qui Zhijie tried to follow Nain Singh's ways of meas-uring and wore his thirty-three inch leg irons as Singh had done. After walking about 370 of the 500 miles of the trip, bad weather forced him to stop in 2006. He completed the journey early in 2007, suffering not from the harsh weather, however, but from the leg irons eating away at his ankles.

There are myriad messages in *Railway from Llasa to Katmandu* … I mention but a few. One, the artist is playing with the idea of time in walking where a past journey was made and a future railway will be. He duplicated a journey made in the past but in the opposite direction, which puts him in the direction of the continuation of the Qinghai-Tibet railway in the future. Two, by literally "walk-ing the walk" instead of bve only "talking the talk" of the history of the myth of Shangri-La, Qui Zhijie introduced a note of reality. Furthermore, he took the measure of Tibet with his body, using the length of his strides rather than a measuring instrument, paying the price with the chaffing of his ankles. Qui is actually doing something similar to what Xu Zhen did (not really do) when he feigned an ascent of Everest, to take the measure of the mountain, reducing it by his height. Perhaps not incidentally, Tibet and Mount Everest have long captured the imagination of Westerners, as, respectively, figures of mystery and sublimity. The two artists de-mystify them.

Three, where Yang Shoabin in his *800 Metres* takes issue with social revolu-tionary realism's idealization of labor by pitting the realism of *800 Metres* against it, Qui Zhijie in *Railway from Lhasa to Katmandu* … takes issue instead with the imperialist motives behind the 19th century British Engineers' desire to map the land hitherto unexplored by outsiders. What the British found in Tibet gave rise to the Western fantasies that the new railway will destroy. His performance,

then, followed the route of the long walk that gave rise to the myth of Shangri La and is the same route of the rail line that will tear the myth down. The railway will destroy it both by letting its passengers see how much has already changed--they will see monks riding motorbikes and using cell phones—and by threaten-ing to sound the death knell for the way of life that had excited the imagination of so many in the West. The story that began with Nain Singh's journey will end with the completion of the final stretch of the Quinghai-Tibet railway from llasa to Katmandu, the stretch that Qui Zhijie walked in the *Railway from Llasa to Katmandu* …

A quotation from Qui Zhijie captures a spirit running through the work in the *The Real Thing*: *Contemporary Art From China* and shows *expression* to have stayed at the fore in the new art in China. "Artists are only as good as the lan-guage they use to express themselves; to express their real feelings. Real personal feeling must reflect an historical sensibility, a social experience …" (Smith and Zhen:98)

I close with a bow to both Rudolph Arnheim and Hsieth Ho made in the form of variations of certain of their ideas that appear in recent work of Zhang Huan seen in the opening exhibition of the 2007 fall season at the Asia Society in New York.[16] Arnheim's idea that dynamic properties are expressive and inhere in the art object itself gets revised in works whose material is as significant and expressive as are the dynamic properties of the forms the material takes. Zhang Huan visited Tibet for the first time in 2005 and saw there many pieces of stat-ues of the Buddha broken during the Cultural Revolution. He collected the pieces and from them made large sculptures of parts of the Buddha.

There were two in the Asia Society—one, a large forearm and hand; the other, a leg and foot, with a small head coming out of the foot. The sculptures, fragments made of fragments, are monumental. In their monumentality they can be read as refusals of the Western tendency to parse the world in terms of kinds and assign little value to mere parts of either a type (any Buddha statue) or a token (this Buddha statue) of the kind. Of primary importance in the works is the *history* of their material, not the dynamic properties or directed tensions of its form. By incorporating the past, the work recovers it. Debris no longer, the broken Buddha pieces have become a celebration in which what were a indiffer-ent parts now make a whole—albeit a "whole" the West would deem but a part. Arnheim's idea is satisfied in that the history *inheres* in the artwork as do the dynamic qualities of its form.

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[16] "Zhang Huan: Altered States," Asia Society and Museum in Manhattan. September 6, 2007 – January 20, 2008. This is the museum's first retrospective of a living artist.

Zhang Huan also made art from the ashes left by offerings and incense in Buddhist temples. He contracted with the largest temple in Shanghai to let his crew cart these ashes away. On view in the Asia Society exhibition is a large Buddha head that reaches almost to the ceiling of the gallery in which it sits, with ear lobes that fold on the floor and a tiny putti-like figure suspended over the head, which is made of the ashes from offerings and prayers that themselves would not have been made had the Buddha not been believed to exist. The ashes are proof of the people's belief. In the exhibition are also two paintings, one of the United States, the other of China, made from temple ashes. In these three works the dead past—ashes are dead--is recycled and brought back to life. Again, it is the history of the material, not the dynamic tensions in the form, which has meaning.

The materials are given form in "a series of factory workshops on the out-skirts of this city [Shanghai, where] welders, carpenters, and other skilled craftsman are busy turning wood, metal and other items into fine objects. ... This former Japanese textile mill, now with 100 workers in its 75,000 square feet of space, is the studio of Zhang Huan, one of China's most daring artists."[17] Gone is the motion of the individual artist's wrist all-important to the classical Chinese painter, in its place the communal activity of craftsman bringing to light Zhang Huan's ideas.

Moreover, rather than the harmony with a timeless universe sought by the painter of old, harmony is now sought with a pre-Mao past. It is sought through material, not the corpse-like, mindless stuff of Cartesian metaphysics, but mate-rial resonant with and symbolic of the Buddhism formerly put in shadow by the People's Republic of China. The materialism is a legacy of Marx, the material respected not as it was by Marx for its use in the production of goods necessary for human life, but for its past. The respect for history is a legacy of Hegel.

What do these materials express in the form that Zhang Huan instructs his workers to given them? A reverence for the past and, at the same time, a refusal to let the past control the present. The spirit, the significance, the *fact* of the fragments of broken statues and the ashes of prayers and hopes resonate in the particular material of Zhang's sculptures that, like T. S. Eliot's Chinese jar, "move perpetually in their stillness." The idea that the artist's goal is to achieve spirit resonance and life movement in his work is satisfied by the robust materi-alism of Chinese avant-garde art.

The artist's respect for the matter of the world comports with his classical forebears finding earth and heaven, all there is, in a pair that is liquid and solid, transparent and opaque, formless and formed, singing and silent, moving and still, that is to say, in water and stone.

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[17] *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, September 3, 2007.

EPILOGUE

Ananta Ch. Sukla

If Expression as a critical concept used for explaining the nature of artwork is understood as signification by natural expressions then it is only another name for Representation in so far as the expressive properties stand for their natural counterparts and are subject to the interpretation by the audience. In this case, the role of the artist is only neutral. But if expression in the sense of *Ausdruck* is the objectification of *Erlebnis*, then the case is certainly different because what is objectified cannot be removed from the artist's lived experience wholesomely. Derrida might be successful in reducing the Husserlian 'expression' to 'indication' which is, according to him, representation of an eidetic presence. But he cannot succeed in ignoring the distinctive function of expression in Dilthey, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. Heidegger's use of the Greek word *aletheia* (correlated with the German *Ereignis*) for the self-manifestation or exteriorization of being is an equivalent of self-presentation or re-presentation as distinguished from representation. Similarly, Merleau-Ponty's rejection of body-subject dichotomy accepts gestures as expression (contra Husserl) in terms of which he explains the art of acting as an *en soi*: an actor is not a persona of the character, but rather its very existence. His phenomenological semiotics distinguishes speech as an *expression* of thought from smoke as an indexical sign or *representation* of fire. For Merleau-Ponty both art and language are typically *expressions*, not *indications* (*representations*)—the *expressed* and the *expressions* are organically inseparable whereas the *represented* and the *representation* may not be so. If speech as such is an expression, then classification of language as expressive and non-expressive by the functionalist linguist appears conceptually unsound, and the traditional question "whose expression"?—whether of the author or of the character?—appears naïve because they are organically inseparable—art is the *en soi* of the artist.

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological perspective appears to have dissolved the fundamental problem regarding the validity of expression as an aesthetic concept as also of its paradigm mode of function—linguistic or non linguistic. The debate over the domination of subject (humanism) and its subjugation to social practices (Neo-Marxism) or language (Lacan) or Power (Foucault) does not subvert the role of expression in explaining the nature of aesthetic creation rebutting the claims of its rival concepts such as mimesis and representation.

Against the vast backdrop of the conceptual status of expression, as portrayed by Sukla in his Prologue, the contemporary thinkers, presented in this volume, appear to have exercised their intellectual freedom in focusing upon expression as an aesthetic concept without surrendering themselves to any particular school or individual authority. All of them interpret and defend expression in their own ways, and contribute to the continuity and growth of this concept in the course of its journey in future.

Sometimes the contributors are opposed to each other, for example, when Chari argues that natural objects are not expressive in themselves, Wiseman observes that, according to the Chinese tradition, art material can be expressive in itself. Sukla highlights the linguistic paradigm of expression in the Indian tradition whereas Wirth stresses its non-linguistic character in the Japanese-Buddhist epistemology and ontology. Fenner prefers a correlation of expression with representation to distinguishing one from the other. Gerwen distinguishes between natural and aesthetic expressions and demonstrates that aesthetic surgery tends to violate the basic principles of this distinction. Corroborating the Barthean view he argues that plastic surgery should be viewed as only a costume that does not bring any aesthetic transformation in the 'person' of the patient.

Keeping aside the complex theoretical network debating over an essential or singular notion of expression, Van Camp does not hesitate to offer a pragmatic view that expression might refer to a number of phenomena, including even the humanist "self-expression" or expression of the "inner" emotions with reference to the performing art of dance in particular.

Contributions to the present volume cross-examine the related perspectives of expression in its natural and aesthetic contexts even along the traditional humanist and pragmatist (Dewey) lines without ignoring the perspectives in the Heideggerian and Searlean phenomenology such as that in Jacquette's dealing with the topic. Bender does not even hesitate to correlate several aesthetic concepts such as representation, reference, depiction, denotation and exemplification with expression as dealt with in the traditional idealist, realist and analytic perspectives, although he draws upon his own experience as a pictorial artist in formulating his own idea of expression. On the other hand, Goldblatt correlates the Platonic theory of inspiration with Danto's idea that expression is necessarily a communicative token.

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INDEX

LIBRI NIGRI

THINKING ACROSS BOUNDARIES

Edited by Hans Rainer Sepp

The *libri nigri* meet preferentially at sites where the boundaries of realities, standpoints, disciplines as well as cultural traditions and traditions of knowledge come into view and where their assumptions are negotiable. To trace their intentions of reasoning is more important than the search for the reasons themselves; the daring experiment means more than the effectual model; disturbing action more than the drive towards safeguarding. Since the sites for decisive action are found mostly on the fringes and not at the centers and since boundaries not only function as limits but also simultaneously cover up the potential for difference and otherness, this series will also not refrain from entering the terrain of the Utopian.